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MASSACHUSETTS.

Fourth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board of Education, continued.

We continue our extracts from this valuable document; valuable not only as throwing light on the present condition of common school education in Massachusetts but because it is full of suggestions which are peculiarly applicable to the circumstances of our own schools. There is scarcely a topic touched upon in the whole of this report which is not worthy of the consideration of the friends of school improvement in Connecticut.

We would especially commend to the attention of our cities and populous towns, the brief account which is subjoined of the system of public schools in Boston, Lowell, Nantucket, Charlestown and Roxbury. These cities are now in the actual enjoyment of systems of public schools, which are common in the highest sense of the term—they are so free that the poorest are not excluded, and so good that wealth cannot buy better advantages than can there be given in the substantial branches of an English education.

PRINCIPLES ON WHICH COMMON SCHOOLS ARE SUPPORTED.

On inspecting the laws of the Commonwealth, which provides for public instruction, two grand features stand conspicuously forth, viz: that the benefits of a common school education shall be brought within the reach of every child in the state, however poor; and that the property of the state shall support a system of schools adequate to confer this universal education. These provisions are fundamental and organic. They have been in existence from the very infancy of the colony,—a period of about two centuries,—during all which time, the statute book furnishes no instance of their repeal or modification. The mode of administration has been changed, but not the original basis of the system. The principles have reigned supreme, throughout, that the property of the citizens, whether it represented children or not, should support the schools; and that all children, whether they represented property or not, should possess the means of education.

The theory of public instruction, in this Commonwealth, as deduced from the statute book, and as it generally exists in the minds of the

people, asserts or distributes that instruction, under two heads;—first that of the Incorporated Academy, and second, that of the Common School. The general sphere or office of the incorporated academy is to prepare students for college, or to give to them such specific instruction in advanced studies, as qualifies for some department of educated labor. But the institutions for common education have a wider,—a universal, sphere of action. They are designed, like the common blessings of heaven, to encompass all;—so that every child that is born amongst us, shall as truly be said to be born into a world of intellectual and moral, as into a world of natural light;—not a world where a few splendid beams fall upon a few favored eyes, while others are involved in darkness, but where a broad expanse of light spreads over and glows around all. Our theory of education proceeds upon the supposition that every child will have too many duties to perform in after-life, not to begin to prepare for them, even before he has any conception what they are to be; and that he will have too many dangers and temptations to encounter and to repel, not to begin to provide against them, even before he is apprized that they lie in ambush about his path. For these grand purposes the Common School was established, whose very name proclaims its eulogy.

MULTIPLICATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

During the fifty years, since the enactment of the law, authorizing this geographical division of the towns into districts, very many cases have occurred, where, on account of the laying out of new roads, or the opening of new places of business, the population has shifted, and a portion of territory which once contained inhabitants enough for a school, has been reduced to a small number of people, while the school and the limits of the school district have remained as they were, though the facts which justified their establishment have ceased to exist. On the other hand, where a district, which originally contained only children enough for a single school, has, by an accession to its population, outgrown the dimensions of the schoolhouse, the general course has been to divide the territory of the district, and establish two schools in two schoolhouses, instead of preserving the integrity of the district, and separating the children into older and younger classes, for different apartments in the same house.

Another cause for the dismemberment of districts cannot be too severely censured. Where local or neighborhood quarrels have arisen, from any cause, among the inhabitants of a school district, they have often resulted in a division of its territory. In the administration and management of a school, many points are presented, concerning which, even judicious and well-disposed men may honestly differ; but when hostile parties are arrayed against each other, and a contentious spirit prevails, every passing day furnishes occasions for dissension. The district being thrown into a state of civil warfare, one of the most obvious means for a separation of the combatants and the restoration of peace, is a division of the battle-field. When the passions of men are excited, their highest privileges are readily sacrificed, and this melancholy truth is not without many illustrations. Cases have occurred, where those inhabitants of a district, who contested the location of a schoolhouse in a given spot, on account of its alleged distance from their homes, have prosecuted hostilities to a division of the territory, and have then erected a new house within a stone's throw of the very spot, whose remoteness from their own residences was before deemed an intolerable grievance. The more ignorant the people of a district are, and the more need they consequently have of the benefits of a school, the more likely are they to do themselves this wrong. But the consequences are fatal. The power of the district is annihilated. Suppose a district to have \$90 to be expended for the wages and board of a teacher, and fuel, during the winter school. If his wages are \$20 a month, his board \$8, and the fuel \$2, for the same time, then the sum of \$90 will sustain the school three months. But if a contention among the inhabitants results in a division of the district, the share of each part is reduced to \$45, instead of \$90. This sum, at the same rates, (even after the expense of erecting another schoolhouse has been incurred,) will sustain a school only a month and a half, instead of three months. But the last six weeks of a three month's school, under a good teacher, is worth more than double the first six, so that the value of the divided fund is reduced to less than a fourth part of that of the undivided. Both parties, conqueror and conquered, are alike defeated; for the prize of the contest turns to a shadow the moment it is won.

Other consequences of this evil are, that it leads to the erection of contracted, inadequate schoolhouses; it stands in the way of all outlays for necessary repairs, and of all appropriations for the purchase of furniture, apparatus, libraries, &c., and it gives a new lease of existence to all old schoolhouses, however dissipated and miserable; for notwithstanding their acknowledged inconvenience, discomfort and

unhealthfulness, the answer, that the district is small and poor silences all arguments in favor of a reform. Small districts, too, naturally desiring to prolong their schools disproportionately to the money they draw, are under a constant temptation to employ cheap teachers; and although it is not a universal truth, yet it is a very general one, that a *cheap* and *incompetent* teacher are synonymous terms. Good teachers can do better elsewhere, so that the districts, which have thus crippled and enervated themselves, must, from the necessity of the case, be content with an inferior grade of teachers, not one year only, but year after year, and during the whole stage of their children's education. Straited and impoverished in this way, some districts have been driven to the expedient of wholly omitting the school for a year, and then of expending the allowance of two years, at once. The blessed office of the peace-maker is never more worthily exercised than in restoring a contentious school district to harmony.

Another consideration pertaining to this subject is, that there is a limit downwards as well as upwards, in regard to the number of scholars, most eligible for a school. No teacher can do justice to an ordinary school district, of more than fifty scholars, especially if they are advanced ones. If he has more, he cannot keep them occupied, nor has he time for the necessary oral instruction of the classes. Hence the law of March 19, 1839, requiring that a female assistant should be employed in every town or district school in the state, which contained fifty scholars on an average, unless the town or district should, at a meeting regularly called for the purpose, vote to dispense with the same. But the number of scholars may be too small as well as too great. In most branches, a large class is not only taught as easily, but more efficiently than a small one. Numbers are a natural stimulus to all the social faculties, and hence they incite to greater exertions. As the number of inquisitive learners is increased, more questions will be asked in regard to the lessons, and thus the subject will be presented in a greater variety of lights. All experienced teachers must have observed, that a bright scholar will suggest doubts or difficulties, which not only would never have occurred to a learned man, but would be less likely to occur to him, just in proportion to the extent of his learning. Hence the advantage of numbers in a school; and if fifty be regarded as the maximum, probably forty would be as the minimum for the common school; but we have more than twelve hundred below this number. The natural consequences of very small districts, are poverty in the purse that supports, and in the spirit which animates, them; and when these disastrous and blighting effects do not follow, it is only because the powerful tendency to such a result is counteracted by a few energetic and indefatigable men, who supply a vigor of will which sustains the activity of the system, in defiance of its natural infirmities. In fine, it is obvious, that all the strength which comes from the union and concert of numbers is lost, when a town commits the grand error of pulverizing its territory, and leaving each atom to its own resources.

CONSOLIDATION OF TWO OR MORE DISTRICTS.

Where there are now two or three school districts, in a section of country not exceeding four or five square miles in area, (equal to two, or a little more than two, miles square;) or when the extreme settled parts of a section of any size, are but about one mile, or one mile and a half, from the centre of its population, the remedy is the consolidation of the district into one, and the separation of the older from the younger scholars. If the number of children is sufficiently large, three divisions are better than two,—the first to contain the scholars below six or seven years of age, the second, those between that age and eleven, twelve, and thirteen, according to circumstances, and the third, all above. Where this has already been done, the advantages are so apparent, that no consideration could induce the united districts to revert to the old system, by a separation. Where all the small children belonging to two or three schools are brought together, the number of those of similar ages and attainments is two or three times as great. Instead of calling up the children singly, to teach them the alphabet, or to read in simple lessons, and devoting but two or three minutes to each one, as is commonly done,—all, in the same stage of advancement, may be classed together; and thus the time, so much of which is wasted in coming and going, and in beginning and ending, the lessons, and all of which is substantially lost by being broken into fragments, becomes sufficient, when its scattered portions are united, for a thorough recitation, with the necessary accompaniment of oral explanations. This course would promote two great purposes, economy in time, and efficiency of instruction, and would thereby immeasurably increase both the quantity and quality of the education which the same amount of money could be made to yield.

UNION SCHOOLS.

The advantages of the Union School may be briefly stated under the following heads:—1. Economy of the plan. 2. Management and Discipline.

1. **ECONOMY OF THE PLAN.** In the first place, the plan of Union Districts commends itself on the score of economy, to every man, who desires to make a given amount of money accomplish more good; or to derive an equal amount of good from less money. In my report on schoolhouses, pp. 30, 31,* it is arithmetically proved,

* See Connecticut Common School Journal, Vol. I. p. 117.

that, where four districts can be united for this purpose, a given sum of money, which now sustains four summer schools, taught by females, and four winter schools taught by males, only four months each, would under the proposed arrangement, maintain the four summer schools, six months each, and a winter school, eight months, instead of four, would give the master \$35 a month instead of \$25, and would still leave in the treasury, an unexpended balance of \$20. The demonstration, as to the economy of the plan, being there wrought out, and open to the inspection of any one who will examine it, I leave this topic, with a single statement, illustrative of the necessity of adopting some immediate and efficient remedy. In my circuit, last autumn, through a part of the state which I had not visited before, I saw six school houses all situated on the same road, the extreme ones of which were but a mile and a half apart, and of course only three-fourths of a mile from a central point. In these, the uniform practice had been to employ six females in summer, and six males in winter. And thus, as it regards the winter schools, the wages and board of six men had been paid, and fuel for six fires provided, when one male principal, who might have received, and been worthy of the most liberal salary,—with suitable female assistants, if necessary,—might have accomplished ten times the good, at a greatly reduced expense. All this was acknowledged as soon as pointed out, and assurances of a change gratefully given. How great would be the gain, if the spirit of economy, which is often so active at the town meeting when the money for schools is granted could be transferred to its expenditure, by a wiser mode of appropriation.

2. **MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE.** A more trying situation to a person of judgment and good feelings cannot well be conceived, than that of having the sole charge of a school of sixty, seventy or eighty scholars, of all ages, where he is equally exposed to censure for the indulgences that endanger good order, and for the discipline that enforces it. One of the inquiries contained in the circular letter to the school committees, in 1838, was respecting the ages of the children attending our public schools. By the answers it appeared, that in very many places the schools were attended by scholars of all ages, between four years and twenty; and, in some places, by those between two years and a half and twenty-five; and thus the general regulations of the school, as to order, stillness, and the observance of a code of fixed laws, were the same, for infants but just out of their cradles, and for men who had been enrolled seven years in the militia. Now, nothing can be more obvious, than that the kind of government, appropriate and even indispensable, for one portion of these scholars, was flagrantly unsuitable for the other. The larger scholars, with a liberal recess, can keep their seats and apply their minds for three consecutive hours. But to make small children sit, both dumb and motionless, for three successive hours, with the exception of a brief recess and two short lessons, is an infraction of every law which the Creator has impressed upon both body and mind. There is but one motive by which this violence to every prompting of nature can be committed, and that is an overwhelming, stupefying sense of fear. If the world were offered to these children, as a reward for this prolonged silence and inaction, they would spurn it; the deep instinct of self preservation alone, is sufficient for the purpose. The irreparable injury of making a child sit straight, and silent, and motionless, for three continuous hours, with only two or three brief respites, cannot be conceived. Its effect upon the body is to inflict severe pain, to impair health, to check the free circulations in the system,—all which leads to dwarfishness;—and to misdirect the action of the vital organs, which leads to deformity. In regard to the intellect, it suppresses the activity of every faculty, and as it is a universal law, in regard to them all, that they acquire strength by exercise and lose tone and vigor by inaction, the inevitable consequence is, both to diminish the number of things they will be competent to do, and to disable them from doing this limited number so well as they otherwise might. In regard to the temper and morals, the results are still more deplorable. To command a child, silent in regard to speech and dead in regard to motion, when every limb and organ aches for activity;—to set a child down in the midst of others, whose very presence acts upon his social nature as irresistibly as gravitation acts upon his body, and to prohibit all recognition of, or communication with his fellows, is subjecting him to a temptation to disobedience, which it is alike physically and morally impossible he should wholly resist. What observing person, who has ever visited a school, where the laws of bodily and mental activity were thus violated, has failed to see how keenly the children watch the motions of the teacher, how eagerly, the first moment when his face is turned from them, or any person or object intervenes to screen them from his view, they seize upon the occasion to whisper, laugh, chaffer, make grimaces, or do some other thing against the known laws of the school. Every clandestine act of this kind cultivates the spirit of deception, trickery and fraud; it leads to the formation, not of an open and ingenious, but of a dissimulating, wily, secretive character. The evil is only aggravated when the teacher adopts the practice of looking out, under his eye-

brows as it is called, or of glancing at them obliquely, or of wheeling suddenly round, in order to detect offenders in the act of transgression. Such a course is a practical lesson in artifice and stratagem, set by the teacher; and the consequence is, that to entrap on the one side and elude on the other, soon becomes a matter of rivalry and competition, between teacher and pupils. Probably it is within the recollection of most persons, that after the close of some school terms, both teacher and pupils have been heard to boast,—the one, how many he had ensnared, the others, how often they had escaped;—thus presenting the spectacle of the moral guide of our youth, and the moral subjects of his charge boasting of mutual circumvention and dissimulation.

Teachers who manage schools with a due observance of those laws with which the Creator has pervaded the human system, are accustomed, when scholars have become restless and uneasy, to send them out to run, or, in some way, to take exercise, until the accumulation of muscular and nervous energy, which prompted their uneasiness, is expended. They will then return to the school room to sit with composure, or to study with diligence and vigor.

I have deemed this matter of so much consequence, and have found, in some places, such inveterate, false habits and modes of thinking respecting it, that I have desired to fortify my own views by those of gentlemen, whose authority none will venture to question. Accordingly I have obtained the opinion of some of the most eminent physicians and physiologists in the State, and have selected three from the number to be placed in the appendix.*

The remedies for these various evils are, the establishment of Union Schools, wherever the combined circumstances of territory and population will allow;—the consolidation of two or more districts into one, where the union system is impracticable; and where the population is so scarce as to prevent either of these courses, there to break in upon the routine of the school, either by confining the young children for a less number of hours, or by giving to them two recesses, each half day. The health of the body must be preserved, because it is the only medium through which the brightest intellect and the purest morals can bless the world.

If it were possible to measure or gauge the quantity and quality of instruction, which the teacher could give, under the union system, compared with that which he can give in a school composed of scholars of all ages and in all stages of advancement, no further proof, in favor of a classification of the children into divisions of older and younger, would be needed. A teacher well versed in the better modes of instruction, which are beginning to be adopted, will, in most branches, teach each one of a class of twenty, more, in the same time, than he could teach any one of the same class. What an accession to his usefulness, that is, to the improvement of the children, would thus be gained! And is it not an unpardonable waste of means, where it can possibly be avoided, to employ a man, at \$25 or \$30 a month, to teach the alphabet, when it can be done much better, at half price, by a female teacher?

The Union School is found to improve all the schools in the constituent districts. The children in the lower schools look upward to the higher with ambition, and labor more earnestly, that they may be prepared to enter it. So far as my knowledge extends, no districts which have adopted, could be induced to abandon it.]

SCHOOLHOUSES.

It is a subject for universal congratulation, that, when speaking on our schoolhouses, emotions of pleasure now begin to mingle with those of pain. Before the publication, in 1832, by the American Institute of Instruction, of two most valuable papers on this subject,—viz. Dr. Alcott's Prize Essay, and the Lecture of William J. Adams, Esq.—there was not to my knowledge, (and I have now been four times over the State with this subject among the uppermost in my mind,) a single public schoolhouse in the Commonwealth, which in its general construction, and especially in its interior arrangement, would now be considered even tolerably good. From that time to 1838 and 9, the erection of a schoolhouse became a fact of less rare occurrence; and in some of those which were built, a part of the improvements suggested in the excellent productions above referred to, were adopted. During the year now just passed, more schoolhouses have been erected than for ten years, previous to 1838; and not only is the number greater, but many of them are admirable models of schoolhouse architecture. The examples set by Boston, Chelsea, Charlestown, Lowell, Roxbury, Plymouth, Greenfield, are worthy of universal imitation. [See pages 156, 157, 158.]

The subject of schoolhouse architecture has been so extensively discussed, both in former reports, and now in the Abstracts, as to preclude the necessity of any detailed reference to it, at the present time. The close connection of the schoolhouses with the cheerfulness and health of children, with their symmetry of form and length of life; its intimate relation to their habits of order, cleanliness, and punctuality; its powerful influence on intellectual progress, on manners and temper, and through temper on conduct and character: its prerogative of deciding the question, whether the school shall be a place of attraction or

repulsion to the young, from the day of their earliest associations with it: its power to further, or to baffle all the plans of a good teacher; and its being the pride or the opprobrium of the district where it stands;—all these considerations have been so earnestly and loudly urged, that there can scarcely be an individual in the State, whose ears they have not reached. There is not a town in the State, where some men cannot now be found who comprehend this subject in its great relations to the public good; and to them must be committed the duty of arousing the public mind to an active sense of its importance. Academies and private schools, which are sustained by a few individuals, are, almost without exception, kept in comfortable, well-arranged and attractive buildings. Why is it, that the whole public is so much less able than a part of it, to maintain decent and respectable places for education? Why should private dwellings, churches, courthouses, markets, or even jails and prisons be superior, in some of the most important desiderata of a residence, to the public schoolhouse? Certainly, a foreigner, in travelling over our territory, would find a surer augury of the perpetuity, or the downfall of our institutions, in the appearance of our schoolhouses, than in all else within the range of his observation. Forts, arsenals, garrisons, armies, navies, are means of security and defence, which were invented in half-civilized times and in feudal or despotic countries; but schoolhouses are the Republican line of fortifications, and if they are dismantled and dilapidated, ignorance, and vice will pour in their legions through every breach.

Before leaving this subject, however, it is necessary to point out one evil which a little caution will abundantly remedy. I refer to the bad repair of schoolhouses. A schoolhouse may be tolerable in its general construction and appearance, and yet be wretched and perilous, from wanting a few panes of glass in the windows, a hinge or panel for the door, plaster for the ceiling, a few feet of good stove pipe, or some similar reparation. It is a sad commentary on the character of the people, when a schoolhouse, surrounded by elegant mansions, is suffered to remain out of repair. A pane of glass will occasionally be broken, and the expedient of supplying its place, temporarily, with a hat or a coat, may be necessary; but a wooden substitute, well fastened in, argues premeditated neglect. These mischiefs often arise, because the prudential committee, whose duty it is to put and to keep the schoolhouse in good condition, has no district funds, in his hands, for that purpose, and he dislikes to run the district into debt to any third person, or to assume the expense himself, and thereby become its creditor. The district neglects to levy a tax, because the amount immediately required may be but three or four dollars,—perhaps only as many shillings, and because the expenses of assessment and collection will exceed the sum needed; and thus the evil continues, although each individual suffers more than the whole cost of the remedy. One district, last winter, had the sum of \$73 to expend for its winter school. A panel was gone from the schoolhouse door, which a few shillings would have replaced, but there were no funds, and the consequence was that it cost \$23 out of the seventy-three for fuel, while the remaining fifty dollars was expended for wages and board. Such enormous wastefulness is probably without a parallel; but any condition of things which permits it, should be immediately changed. It ought to be universally understood, that the prudential committee of a district carries an unlimited credit with him, as well for repairing, as for providing a schoolhouse:—nay, that he is liable to indictment, if he neglects, in the language of the law, to "provide a suitable place for the school." But as it is always more agreeable to the agent to receive all requisite pecuniary means from his principal, the district ought always to keep a little money on hand, to be drawn upon, when necessary, by the prudential committee; or it should pass a vote, authorising him to borrow sums sufficient to meet all exigencies, and then grant an occasional tax for their payment. In most cases, a tax of forty, or even thirty dollars, would provide for all contingencies for some time. Being granted and certified, the tax might be assessed and collected with the town taxes. One grant, in half a dozen or more years, would probably be sufficient; there would always be money on hand, and thus the mischiefs of delay, and the expense of separate levies for small sums, would both be avoided.

There is one other obstacle in the way of having a good schoolhouse, which, indeed, but seldom exists, but when it does exist, it is a very serious one, and at present, incapable of removal. It has happened several times within the last three years, that when a district very much needed a new house, and was ready to erect one, no site could be obtained for the purpose. The owner of a large farm, occupying the centre of the district, being opposed to the erection of a new house, either because he had no children to be benefitted by the school, or could educate his own at a private one, or was averse to paying his share of the tax, has utterly refused to convey a piece of land for the house to stand on, or has demanded a price so exorbitant as to make a purchase by the district impossible. In these cases, I have been asked how it happens, that when a private citizen or a corporation wishes to erect a mill for spinning cotton or wool, or sawing timber, or grinding corn or bark, or making nails; or when land is wanted for a turnpike or a railroad;—how it happens that a man's tillage land, his orchard or his garden, may be taken, or even his house cut down and removed, and his whole farm appropriated, but when a district wants but a single half acre of land to be consecrated to the culture of the rising generation, it

* These letters may be found on pages 120 and 126 of this volume.

cannot be had. My answer has been, that in regard to the more material and corporeal interests of manufactures and thoroughfares, the Legislature has been importuned to act, and has provided by statute for a compulsory transfer of a man's estate, at a price fixed by a third party:—but that, in regard to the spiritual and moral interests of our youth, no such application to them has ever been made, nor has any public opinion as yet existed, which would give to such an application a prospect of success.

ORIGIN OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

It is due to many of those who sustain the system of private schools, to say, that they have been driven into its adoption, by the imperfect character of the public schools. If a parent, who feels,—as every one worthy to be a parent does feel,—an obligation upon himself, authoritative as a command from heaven, to give to his children a good education, and who, therefore, is resolved, in the last resort, to make any sacrifice for the object;—if he cannot command that education in the district where he belongs; if the school term is short; if from the low rate of compensation given, a perpetual succession of young and inexperienced teachers, are employed; if the schoolhouse is in such a condition as to put the health of his children in daily jeopardy;—then, after he has made earnest and persevering efforts to obtain, at least, a safe schoolhouse, a suitable length of term, and a competent instructor, and such efforts have proved unavailing; so far is that parent from being blameworthy for securing a safer house, a longer term, and a better teacher, that if he did not do it, the voice of the community would unite with that of his own conscience in condemning his neglect. The necessity, however, of providing a private school for his children, in no case supersedes the obligation of laboring to elevate the public school, until the private one shall be no longer needful. And so of those who wish to dedicate their talents to the honorable profession of teaching. If they can command only short terms and scanty wages in the public service, they are free to seek employment elsewhere, for on no principle of justice can the public demand from them gratuitous labor.

INFLUENCE OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS, &c.

Under this head are included all the kinds of schools, which fall below the grade of those incorporated academies, whose design it is to prepare pupils for the college, or for some of the departments of educated labor. This class of schools teach the same branches which are taught, or should be taught, in the Common School; and, on the part of those who sustain them, they are to a very great extent, truly and professedly, substitutes for what the Common School ought to be. Their ordinary expense is six or eight times as great as that of an equally good Common School would be, if the two funds were united. But having, in my First Annual Report, explained, in some detail, the unfavorable influence, which this class of schools exerts upon the free ones, I will not go over that ground again, except in a very summary manner. It was there shown that the natural effect of this class of schools was to enhance the cost of education, without improving its quality; to give the teachers a higher tuition fee, for each scholar, but to add nothing to the amount which, under a better system, they would obtain from the public; to withdraw, from the public schools, some of the best scholars, and therefore to leave the rest without the benefit of their example, and, with the children, to withdraw, also the guardian care and watchfulness of some of the most intelligent men in the district. It was further shown, that these schools, having supplied their patrons with means for educating their own children, adequate to their wants, they took away all motive to increase the town's appropriation, if they did not cause a positive reduction of it; and that, as in most country districts, there were no surplus intelligence and public spirit that could be spared from the cause of public education, the transfer of the sympathies and interest of a considerable number of the most intelligent citizens left the Common School to languish; or, what is infinitely worse, to acquire, through neglect, a pernicious efficiency in the formation of bad habits and character.

It is now three years since these views were expressed; and after the most attentive observation and reflection during the intervening time, the only modification of them I would make, would be to set forth in a more earnest and impressive manner, the disastrous effects of this division of the fund, and this sundering of the unity of interests, which should be kept forever one and indissoluble, and consecrated to the promotion of a common cause. As before stated, could these two funds be united, our school terms might be prolonged to the period of ten months in a year, and all the teachers receive an addition of more than ten per cent. to their wages, without the appropriation of an additional dollar. Other consequences which would necessarily flow from such a union of resources and concert of action would be, that the best of the private school teachers would be transferred to the public schools; in many cases, the convenient and even elegant houses, which have been prepared for the private schools would be purchased by the districts, and thus the stigma of their own forlorn and wretched buildings be taken away;—for it is as certain, as that the shadow attends the substance, that on entering a handsome village in almost any part of the State, and seeing a small, low-roofed, dilapidated, weather-beaten schoolhouse; obtruding itself from the corner of some street, or surrounded by noisy workshops, there will be found in

that village one or more flourishing private schools, kept in commodious and elegant houses.

The prostration of the energies of our school system, by this division of the funds expended to sustain it, is not the only evil which that division causes. It tends strongly to a perversion of the social feelings of the children,—to envy on the one side, and to an assumption of superiority on the other. We may moralize to children, forever, upon the duty of *doing* to others, as they would be done by; and also, (which is within the equitable interpretation of the same divine law,) upon the duty of *feeling* towards others as they would have others feel towards them;—or upon the duty of each one's esteeming others better than himself; but if they are sent forth at the same hour, and pass along the same streets, to enter houses of instruction almost as different from each other as the squalid wigwam of the savage from the elegant mansions of the civilized, it is impossible, while human nature remains as it is, that feelings of alienation, of distance and discord, should not spring up and choke out their social affections. An enemy is among them sowing tares,—not in the night, but in the open day; not while the parents are asleep, for it is the parents themselves who scatter the seed. The social and dissocial feelings of children are, to a very great extent, the natural growth of the circumstances in which they are placed; and therefore it is, that the circumstances, as far as possible, must be sought or avoided, out of which proper or improper feelings naturally emanate;—and they are responsible for the result, who determine the circumstances.

The whole number of scholars attending the private schools of all kinds, last year, was less than thirty thousand; that is, less than one-sixth part of the whole number of children in the State, between the ages of four and sixteen years. Amongst whom are these thirty thousand children destined to live, when they pass from minority to manhood? Is not this one-sixth to receive good or suffer evil from social institutions, which the other five-sixths will mould according to their own will? Are they not to depend, not only for social consideration and public favor, but also, to a great extent, for the security of person and property and reputation, on the feelings of the community towards them? And is it not, therefore the clearest policy, as well as the highest duty, to establish such relations among all the children, as will prepare them for their common destiny when men? Besides, it is impossible to inflict any other so great an intellectual injury upon a child, as to inspire him with the pride of a superiority which is merely accidental;—and the result is the same, whether that pride be inspired, by direct inculcation, or by surrounding him with circumstances which naturally excite it. Personal exertion is the only unfailing resource, upon which he can draw. Take away every thing else, but leave the spirit that prompts to exertion, and you leave the means of the highest worldly prosperity and honors. Take this spirit away, and he is impoverished, though left in possession of every adventitious good. The idea of superiority, derived from the casual and accidental distinctions of wealth, or parentage, or rank, seems to take away the necessity of personal exertion, and thus it destroys the sources of greatness; and men of wealth, of rank and of conspicuous standing in society from whatsoever cause, must reconcile themselves to see their children become inferior men, and fall into inferior positions in society, notwithstanding all the labor and cost bestowed upon them, until they will provide for those children some antidote against thinking themselves superior to their fellows, on any grounds but those of the power and the will to do good. All children, born to what is commonly called a better fortune, so far from having their attention turned to that fact, need the strongest motives to counteract its influence.

FEMALE TEACHERS.

It is gratifying to observe that a change is rapidly taking place, both in public sentiment and action, in regard to the employment of female teachers. The number of male teachers, in all the summer and winter schools, for the last year, was thirty-three less than for the year preceding, while the number of females was one hundred and three more. That females are incomparably better teachers for young children than males, cannot admit of a doubt. Their manners are more mild and gentle, and hence more in consonance with the tenderness of childhood. They are endowed by nature with stronger parental impulses, and this makes the society of children delightful, and turns duty into pleasure. Their minds are less withdrawn from their employment, by the active scenes of life; and they are less intent and scheming for future honors or emoluments. As a class, they never look forward, as young men almost invariably do, to a period of legal emancipation from parental control, when they are to break away from the domestic circle and go abroad into the world, to build up a fortune for themselves; and hence, the sphere of hope and of effort is narrower, and the whole forces of the mind are more readily concentrated upon present duties. They are also of purer morals. In the most common and notorious vices of the age, profanity, intemperance, fraud, &c., there are twenty men to one woman; and although as life advances, the comparison grows more and more unfavorable to the male sex, yet the beginnings of vice are early, even when their developments are late;—on this account, therefore, females are infinitely more fit than males to be the guides and exemplars of young children.

Females are beginning to be employed, to a considerable extent, in the winter schools. This practice is highly commended, in some of

the committees' reports; it is strongly discountenanced in others. With deference to those who hold these opposite opinions, I take the liberty to suggest, that no uniform rule can be laid down on the subject. A sound discretion must be exercised, and each case decided upon its own merits. In very few instances, if in any, would it be prudent to employ a young female, for her first term, in a winter school. To meet the greater difficulties of such a school, there should be at least, the preparation of experience. So, where the quiet and harmony of the school are endangered by large and turbulent boys, the power of a sterner voice, and a firmer hand may be necessary to overawe an insurrectionary spirit. Yet even this class of cases is the subject of discrimination. Sometimes, from false notions of honor and pride, boys would be spurred on to disobedience and open rebellion against the authority of a master, while their generous sentiments would be touched with a feeling of chivalry towards a female; they would therefore respect a request from a mistress, though they would spurn a command from a master. But, if a dissension pervades the district on any subject in the remotest degree connected with the school, it can hardly ever be safe to place a female between the contending parties. Her influence is of a moral character; it flourishes amid peace and union, consisting more in the persuasion which wins, than in the power which overrules. But when the teacher has experience, when the district is harmonious, and will frown into silence the slightest whisper of mutiny from the scholars, then a female will keep quite as good a school as a man, at two-thirds of the expense, and will transfuse into the minds of her pupils, purer elements, both of conduct and character, which will extend their refining and humanizing influences far outward into society, and far onward into futurity. Some of the finest schools in the State are the result of this happy combination of circumstances.

QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

1st. A Knowledge of Common-School Studies.—Teachers should have a perfect knowledge of the rudimental branches which are required by law to be taught in our schools. They should understand, not only the rules, which have been prepared as guides for the unlearned, but also the principles on which the rules are founded,—those principles which lie beneath the rules, and supersede them in practice; and from which, should the rules be lost, they could be framed anew. Teachers should be able to teach *subjects*, not manuals merely.

This knowledge should not only be thorough and critical, but it should be always ready at command, for every exigency,—familiar like the alphabet, so that, as occasion requires, it will rise up in the mind instantaneously, and not need to be studied out, with labor and delay. For instance, it is not enough that the teacher be able to solve and elucidate an arithmetical question, by expending half an hour of school time in trying various ways to bring out the answer; for that half hour is an important part of the school session, and the regular exercises of the school must be shortened or slurred over to repair the loss. Again, in no school can a teacher devote his whole and undivided attention to the exercises, as they successively recur. Numerous things will demand simultaneous attention. While a class is spelling or reading, he may have occasion to recall the roving attention of one scholar; to admonish another by word or look; to answer some question put by a third; or to require a fourth to execute some needed service. Now, if he is not so familiar with the true orthography of every word, that his ear will instantaneously detect an error in the spelling, he will, on all such occasions, pass by mistakes without notice, and therefore without correction, and thus interweave wrong instruction with right, through all the lessons of the school. If he is not so familiar, too, both with the rules of reading, and the standard of pronunciation for each word, that a wrong emphasis or cadence, or a mispronounced word will jar his nerves, and recall even a wandering attention, then innumerable errors will glide by his own ear unnoticed, while they are stamped upon the minds of his pupils. These remarks apply with equal force to recitations in grammar and geography. A critical knowledge, respecting all these subjects, should be so consciously present with him, that his mind will gratefully respond to every right answer or sign, made by the scholar, and shrink from every wrong one, with the quickness and certainty of electrical attraction and repulsion. In regard to the last-named branch, geography,—a study which, in its civil or political department, is constantly mutable and progressive, the teacher should understand, and be able to explain, any material changes, which may have occurred since the last edition of his text-book; as for instance, the erection of Iowa into a territorial government by the last Congress; or, during the last year, the restitution of Syria to the Turkish government through the intervention of the Four European Powers. This establishment of a link between past events and present times, this realization of things as lately done, or now doing, sheds such a strong light upon a distant scene, as makes it appear to be near us; and thus gives to all the scholars, a new and inexpressible interest in their lessons.

2nd. Aptness to teach. Aptness to teach involves the power of perceiving how far a scholar understands the subject-matter to be learned, and what, in the natural order, is the next step he is to take. It involves the power of discovering and of solving at the time, the exact difficulty, by which the learner is embarrassed. The removal of a slight impediment, the drawing aside of the thinnest veil, which happens

to divert his steps, or obscure his vision, is worth more to him, than volumes of lore on collateral subjects. How much does the pupil comprehend of the subject? What should his next step be? Is his mind looking towards a truth or an error? The answer to these questions must be intuitive, in the person who is apt to teach. As a dramatic writer throws himself, successively, into the characters of the drama he is composing, that he may express the ideas and emotions, peculiar to each; so the mind of a teacher should migrate, as it were, into those of his pupils, to discover what they know and feel and need; and then, supplying from his own stock, what they require, he should reduce it to such a form, and bring it within such a distance, that they can reach out and seize and appropriate it. He should never forget that intellectual truths are naturally adapted to give intellectual pleasure; and that, by leading the minds of his pupils onward to such a position in relation to these truths, that they themselves can discover them, he secures to them the natural reward of a new pleasure with every new discovery, which is one of the strongest, as well as most appropriate incitements to future exertion.

Aptness to teach includes the presentation of the different parts of a subject, in a natural order. If a child is told that the globe is about twenty-five thousand miles in circumference, before he has any conception of the length of a mile, or of the number of units in a thousand, the statement is not only utterly useless as an act of instruction, but it will probably prevent him, ever afterwards, from gaining an adequate idea of the subject. The novelty will be gone, and yet the fact unknown. Besides, a systematic acquisition of a subject knits all parts of it together, so that they will be longer retained and more easily recalled. To acquire a few of the facts, gives us fragments only;—and even to master all the facts, but to obtain them promiscuously, leaves what is acquired so unconnected and loose, that any part of it may be jostled out of its place and lost, or remain only to mislead.

Aptness to teach, in fine, embraces a knowledge of methods and processes. These are indefinitely various. Some are adapted to accomplish their object in an easy and natural manner; others in a toil-some and circuitous one;—others, again, may accomplish the object at which they aim, with certainty and despatch, but secure it by inflicting deep and lasting injuries upon the social and moral sentiments. We are struck with surprise, on learning, that, but a few centuries since, the feudal barons of Scotland, in running out the lines around their extensive domains, used to take a party of boys, and whip them, at the different posts and land-marks, in order to give them a retentive memory, as witnesses, in case of future litigation or dispute. Though this might give them a vivid recollection of localities, yet it would hardly improve their ideas of justice, or propitiate them to bear true testimony in favor of the chastiser. But do not those, who have no aptness to teach, sometimes accomplish their objects by a kindred method?

He who is apt to teach is acquainted, not only with common methods for common minds, but with peculiar methods for pupils of peculiar dispositions and temperaments; and he is acquainted with the principles of all methods, whereby he can vary his plan, according to any difference of circumstances.

3d. Management, Government, and Discipline of a School.—Experience has also proved, that there is no necessary connection between literary competency, aptness to teach, and the power to manage and govern a school successfully. They are independent qualifications; yet a marked deficiency in any one of the three, renders the others nearly valueless. In regard to the ordinary management or administration of a school, how much judgment is demanded in the organization of classes, so that no scholar shall either be clogged and retarded, or hurried forward with injudicious speed, by being matched with an unequal yoke-fellow. Great discretion is necessary in the assignment of lessons, in order to avoid, on the one hand, such shortness in the tasks, as allows time to be idle; and, on the other, such over-assignments, as render thoroughness and accuracy impracticable, and thereby so habituate the pupil to mistakes and imperfections, that he cares little or nothing about committing them. Lessons, as far as it is possible, should be so adjusted to the capacity of the scholar, that there should be no failure in a recitation, not occasioned by culpable neglect. The sense of shame, or of regret for ignorance, can never be made exquisitely keen, if the lessons given are so long, or so difficult, as to make failures frequent. When "bad marks," as they are called, against a scholar, become common, they not only lose their salutary force, but every addition to them debases his character, and carries him through a regular course of training, which prepares him to follow in the footsteps of those convicts, who are so often condemned, that at length they care nothing for the ignominy of the sentence. Yet all this may be the legitimate consequence of being unequally matched, or injudiciously tasked. It is a sad sight in any school, to see a pupil marked for a deficiency, without any blush of shame, or sign of guilt; and it is never done with impunity to his moral character.

The preservation of order, together with the proper despatch of business, requires a mean, between the too much and the too little, in all the evolutions of the school, which it is difficult to hit. When classes leave their seats for the recitation-stand, and return to them again, or when the different sexes have a recess, or the hour of intermission arrives;—if there be not some order and succession of movement, the school will be temporarily converted into a promiscuous rabble, giving

both the temptation and the opportunity for committing every species of indecorum and aggression. In order to prevent confusion, on the other hand, the operations of the school may be conducted with such military formality and procrastination;—the second scholar not being allowed to leave his seat, until the first has reached the door, or the place of recitation, and each being made to walk on tiptoe to secure silence,—that a substantial part of every school session will be wasted, in the wearisome pursuit of an object worth nothing when obtained.

The government and discipline of a school demands qualities still more rare, because the consequences of error, in these, are still more disastrous. What caution, wisdom, uprightness, and sometimes, even intrepidity are necessary in the administration of punishment. After all other means have been tried, and tried in vain, the chastisement of pupils found to be otherwise incorrigible, is still upheld by law, and sanctioned by public opinion. But it is the last resort, the ultimate resource, acknowledged, on all hands, to be a relic of barbarism, and yet authorized, because the community, although they feel it to be a great evil, have not yet devised and applied an antidote. Through an ignorance of the laws of health, a parent may so corrupt the constitution of his child, as to render poison a necessary medicine; and through an ignorance of the laws of mind, he may do the same thing in regard to punishment. When the arts of health and of education are understood, neither poison nor punishment will need to be used, unless in most extraordinary cases. The discipline of former times was inexorably stern and severe, and even if it were wished, it is impossible now to return to it. The question is, what can be substituted, which, without its severity, shall have its efficiency.

A school should be governed with a steady hand, not only during the same season, but from year to year;—substantially the same extent of indulgence being allowed, and the same restrictions imposed. It is injurious to the children, to alternate between the extremes of an easy and a sharp discipline. It is unjust, also, for one teacher to profit by letting down the discipline of a school, and thus throw upon his successor, the labor of raising it up to its former level.

4th. Good Behaviour.—The effects of civility or discourtesy, of gentlemanly or ungentlemanly deportment, are not periodical or occasional, merely, but of constant recurrence; and all the members of society have a direct interest in the manners of each of its individuals; because each one is a radiating point,—the centre of a circle, which he fills with pleasure or annoyance, not only for those who voluntarily enter it, but for those also, who, in the promiscuous movements of society, are caught within its circumference. Good behaviour includes the elements of that equity, benevolence, conscience, which, in their great combinations, the moralist treats of in his books of ethics, and the legislator enjoins in his codes of law. The school room and its play-ground, next to the family table, are the places, where the selfish propensities come into most direct collision with social duties. Here, then, a right direction should be given to the growing mind. The surrounding influences, which are incorporated into its new thoughts and feelings, and make part of their substance, are too minute and subtle to be received in masses, like nourishment;—they are rather imbibed into the system, unconsciously, by every act of respiration, and are constantly insinuating themselves into it, through all the avenues of the senses. If, then, the manners of the teacher are to be imitated by his pupils,—if he is the glass, at which they “do dress themselves,” how strong is the necessity, that he should understand those nameless and innumerable practices, in regard to deportment, dress, conversation, and all personal habits, that constitute the difference between a gentleman and a clown. We can bear some oddity, or eccentricity in a friend whom we admire for his talents, or revere for his virtues; but it becomes quite a different thing, when the oddity, or the eccentricity, is to be a pattern or model, from which fifty or a hundred children are to form their manners. It was well remarked, by the ablest British traveller who has ever visited this country, that amongst us, “every male above twenty-one years of age, claims to be a sovereign. He is, therefore, bound to be a gentleman.”

5th. Morals.—On the indispensable, all-controlling requisite of moral character, I have but a single suggestion to make, in addition to those admirable views on this subject, which are scattered up and down through the committees' reports. This suggestion relates to the responsibility resting on those individuals, who give letters of recommendation, or certificates of character, to candidates for schools. Probably, one half,—perhaps more,—of all the teachers in the State are comparatively strangers, in the respective places where they are employed. Hence the examining committees, in the absence of personal knowledge, must rely upon testimonials exhibited before them. These consist of credentials, brought from abroad, which are sometimes obtained through the partialities of relationship, interest, or sect; or even given, lest a refusal should be deemed an unneighborly act, and the applicant should be offended or alienated by a repulse. But are interests of such vast moment as the moral influence of teachers upon the rising generation, to be sacrificed to private considerations of relationship, or predilection, or any selfish or personal motive whatever? It may be very agreeable to a person to receive the salary of a teacher, but this fact has no tendency to prove his fitness for the station;—if so, the poor-house would be the place to inquire for teachers;—and what claim to conscience, or benevolence can that man have, who jeopardizes the

permanent welfare of fifty or a hundred children, for the private accommodation of a friend? In regard to pecuniary transactions, it is provided by the laws of the land, that whoever recommends another as responsible and solvent, becomes himself liable for the debts which may be contracted, under a faith in the recommendation, should it prove to have been falsely given. The recommendation is held to be a warranty, and it charges its author with all the losses incurred, within the scope of a fair construction. It is supposed, that, without this responsibility, the expanded business of trade and commerce would be restricted to persons, possessing a mutual knowledge of each others' trust-worthiness or solvency. But why should the precious and enduring interests of morality be accounted of minor importance, and protected by feebler securities, than common traffic? Why should the man who has been defrauded by an accredited pedler, have his remedy against the guarantor, while he, who is instrumental in inflicting upon a district, and upon all the children in a district, the curse of a dissolute, vicious teacher, escapes the condign punishment of general execration? In the contemplation of the law, the school committee are sentinels stationed at the door of every schoolhouse in the State, to see that no teacher ever crosses its threshold, who is not clothed, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, in garments of virtue; and they are the enemies of the human race,—not of contemporaries only, but of posterity,—who, from any private or sinister motive, strive to put these sentinels to sleep, in order that one, who is profane or intemperate, or addicted to low associations, or branded with the stigma of any vice, may elude the vigilance of the watchmen, and be installed over the pure minds of the young, as their guide and exemplar. If none but teachers of pure tastes, of good manners, of exemplary morals, had ever gained admission into our schools, neither the school rooms, nor their appurtenances would have been polluted, as some of them now are, with such ribald inscriptions, and with the carvings of such obscene emblems, as would make a heathen blush. Every person, therefore, who endorses another's character, as one befitting a school teacher, stands before the public as his moral bondsman and sponsor, and should be held to a rigid accountability.

UNIFORMITY IN BOOKS.

Uniformity in books belongs to classification of scholars; without uniformity, indeed, classification is impossible, and without classification, a school loses its collective character, and becomes a promiscuous company of individuals. Should a teacher hear his scholars recite, individually,—the first in geography, the second in grammar, the third in arithmetic, and so on, all must see the inevitable waste of time, and the spiritless routine of the exercises. But one scholar may recite in geography, the next in grammar, and the third in arithmetic, and so forth, just as well as two can recite together from two books of geography, one of which treats, first, of mathematical or astronomical geography, then of civil or political, and then of physical; while the other takes up the political divisions of the earth, one by one, but embraces all the civil, physical, and mathematical descriptions under the successive political heads. It seems not to be considered, that, though all the books may be labelled ‘geography,’ yet that a different arrangement of their contents makes them different books, and renders simultaneous teaching from them impossible.

Whatever defeats classification destroys the power of the teacher; and the loss of power increases in far more than a direct ratio;—the progression being rather geometrical than arithmetical. If the teacher is compelled to divide the time, which he should devote to one class, into two or three parts, in order to hear two or three classes, in the same study, but with different books, all his opportunity for illustration and for oral instruction is taken away, because his whole time is occupied in hastening through the lesson. But if, as has sometimes been the case, the teacher is compelled to divide the time for a recitation in one branch, into six or eight parts, because there are six or eight different kinds of books, there will be hardly power enough left to be the subject of computation. The energies of the most efficient teacher will be broken down under such a system, or rather such want of system. For many other evils, an ingenious teacher may devise some palliation, some mitigating alternative; but for this, there is but one remedy, viz: a conformity with the law, by the school committee, and a conformity with the committee's directions, by the parents and guardians.

A very simple expedient, adopted in many towns, has resulted in the desired reform; and by means of it, the end is attained, without exciting the opposition of parents. Let a list of the books prescribed by the committee, be entered on the Register which is to be given to each teacher, at the opening of the school; or let a list be given to the teacher, at the time of his examination, which it will then be his duty to enter upon the Register; or, as some committees do, let a copy of this list be hung up in the school room, as a general advertisement to the district. Let all the booksellers in the town, or in the neighboring towns, if any, where the parents go to purchase school books, be furnished with copies of the same list. These booksellers, being made acquainted with the kinds of books prescribed for the schools, will readily conclude that they can sell more of the approved than of the unapproved kinds; they will be disposed, therefore, from motives of

interest, to procure the former; and the right kinds of books, being more accessible than the wrong, will naturally tend towards the school room by a sort of outward pressure as well as by a gravitation within, and will soon become its sole occupants. When a uniformity is thus established throughout the town, not only will all the mischiefs above described, be avoided, but a poor family, to whom the expense of school books is sometimes a serious burden, can remove from one district to another in the same town, without either buying a new set of books, or aggravating the evil of diversity which may already exist in the school, by carrying in its old ones.

By the 19th section of the 23d chapter of the Revised Statutes, school committees are authorized to purchase class books, at the expense of the town, and to establish depositories for them, where they shall be sold at such prices as just to reimburse the expense. The adoption of this plan, also, would soon result in a uniformity of books in the schools.

CONSTANCY AND PUNCTUALITY IN ATTENDANCE.

Without authentic information on the subject of irregularity in attendance, the extent to which it has prevailed would have been wholly incredible. According to the school census of last year, the whole number of children in the State, between the ages of four and sixteen, was one hundred and seventy-nine thousand two hundred and sixty-eight,

The average attendance during the summer of the same year, (1839-40), was	179,268
Do. during the winter,	92,698
Of the number attending, who were under four years of age, there were	7,844
Do. over sixteen years of age,	11,834

19,678

If the children under four years of age, who attended school, are deducted from the aggregate of attendance in summer, and those over sixteen years, from the aggregate of attendance in winter, the average attendance of those between four and sixteen, will stand thus;

For summer,	84,854
For winter,	100,010

And allowing twelve thousand, as the number of the children who derive their whole education from academies and private schools, and therefore, are not dependent upon the Common Schools, at all; and deducting this number from the number of children in the State, who are between the ages of four and sixteen years, (thus 179,268—12,000=167,268,) and the proportion of those who attend the Common Schools, in summer, compared with the whole number, dependent upon those schools, is as 84,854 to 167,268, or a very small fraction more than one half;—and the proportion of those who attend the same schools, in winter, compared with the whole number dependent upon them, is as 100,010 to 167,268, or about ten-seventeenths only.

One striking aspect of this lamentable fact, is the waste of money which it proves. The amount raised by taxes, last year, for teachers' wages and board, and fuel for the schools, was \$477,221 24. Of the portion of this sum which was expended for the summer schools, about one half was lost; and of the portion expended for the winter schools, about seven-seventeenths, through irregularity in the attendance of the scholars;—that is, of the \$477,221 24, raised for the support of our public schools, more than two hundred thousand dollars was directly thrown away, by this voluntary abandonment of privileges. Nor, in this computation, is any thing included for interest on the cost of schoolhouses; for the loss of an equal proportion of the amount contributed for public schools, (\$37,269 74); for an equal proportion, also, of the income, (about \$20,000,) of the State school fund; of the income also, (15,270 83,) of local funds for public schools; and of such portions of the income of the surplus revenue as individual towns have appropriated for the support of the schools. Vast, enormous, as the main item of the pecuniary loss, is, a proportional loss from these sources, (which, in the whole amount to more than \$75,000,) would materially enlarge it. If made out with the exactness of a business account, it would startle every business man in the community. Is it a subject for less surprise and regret, because it is an education account? What manufacturing, or other business establishment could prosper, if its laborers should absent themselves for a corresponding proportion of the time? What a direful calamity it would be justly deemed, if some wide-spreading epidemic should visit the State, from year to year, and deprive its children of an equal amount of their school privileges? It is well remarked in one of the reports, that the promulgation of a law, which should deprive the children of so noble a boon, would produce a stamp-act ferment.

Who, beforehand, could have deemed it possible, that a people, so renowned for the virtues of frugality and economy;—for their skill in turning limited means to a great account, would have tolerated this extent of wastefulness? The fact can be explained only on the ground, that we were unaware of its existence. A parent who surmounts no obstacles to get his children daily to school, or who keeps them at home to subserve the pettiest convenience, has no conception, how rapidly the column of absences lengthens, nor of the amount of its footing at the end of the term. He does not see that for every day's

absence of his child, so much mental nourishment is withheld, his growth so much retarded, and that he is preparing to send out that child into the world, an intellectual dwarf.

But with the industrious habits of our community, this amount of money can be re-earned; indeed, it bears no proportion to the annual products of our labor and skill. But an item of loss is involved, which neither labor nor skill can ever repair. The time is irrevocable. The spring-season of human life, once past, cannot be restored. The seed-time lost, the harvest also is lost. This forfeiture is without redemption.

The period, during which, as a general rule, our children attend school, viz: between the ages of four and sixteen years, is twelve years. The proportion of twelve years corresponding with this amount of absences, is more than five years; and, therefore, the children, on an average, for so much of the period of life that should be sacredly devoted to education, are deprived of its benefits. It must also be remembered that this deduction is not made from an entire year, but from the period of seven months and ten days, which was, last year, the average length of the schools; so that schools, originally far too short, are cut down to a little more than half their apparent length, and so much even of a scanty mental subsistence is taken away. When Dr. Franklin said, "Time is money," he referred to adults; with children, time is more valuable than money, it is education.

Our law, in establishing the legal age of majority, or period of emancipation from parental control, at twenty-one years, has followed the clear indications of nature. The period of minority and tutelage which precedes this age, is necessary for the growth and preparation, required for the labors and duties of manhood. And the indications of nature are equally clear in regard to the mind. The young mind needs the instruction and guidance of more mature minds;—it needs instruments and aids, which it is incapable of preparing for itself, nay, of the very existence of which it is itself ignorant, until the full period, or nearly the full period, of legal minority has passed. Were it not so, the young of the human race would have come to their bodily and mental maturity, like the young of the inferior animals, at an earlier period,—at the end of a month, or a year, or, at furthest, at the end of a few years. It is this extensive and irrevocable portion of early life, proved by all observation and analogy to be so essential to a preparation for the duties of manhood, that is withdrawn; and yet, when these neglected children shall arrive at the state of manhood, the duties belonging to that state will be required of them, or society, in some, or all of its relations, must suffer the penalty.

The main trunk of this evil of non-attendance sends off numerous branches, each of which is laden with its own peculiar kind of bitter fruit. One effect is, the injustice done to the teacher. If the Register of the school bears the names of seventy different scholars, while the school is reduced by absences to an average of fifty, the common inference is, that, although seventy is a greater number than one teacher can properly instruct, yet that he must be in fault, if he does not teach the fifty in a competent manner, and advance them at a rapid rate.—And yet a school averaging fifty scholars, reduced to that number from seventy, by absences, is far more difficult, both to instruct and to govern, than a school of a hundred, all of whom attend regularly. A teacher, therefore, ought to be excused, not blamed, if he does not carry a small number of scholars rapidly forward, if the number is made small by irregularity in attendance; yet those who send their children most irregularly, are among the first to complain that they make little progress. The law (under a certain condition) requires the employment of an assistant teacher in all the public schools, when the average number of scholars is fifty. But the principal teacher needs an assistant quite as much, when a school of fifty is reduced to an average of thirty, by absences, as when it rises to seventy by a regular attendance of all the scholars belonging to it.

Again, if parents keep a child at home, for two or three days, or for three or four half days, in a week, he must, at least, be stationary, while the class to which he belongs is advancing. Hence, on his return to the school, he is not in a suitable condition to rejoin his class. But, generally, there is no other class in which he can be placed; and the formation of new classes to meet these cases would soon destroy classification altogether; because the classes would soon become as numerous as the scholars; and the school which should march onward in regular divisions, would be reduced to a promiscuous throng of stragglers. Unless in extraordinary cases, therefore, the absent scholar must resume his place in the class; but as the correct understanding of each successive step in his studies, depends upon his having mastered the preceding steps, he is almost necessarily incapacitated for intelligent study and good recitations. Out of this come, not merely loss of knowledge, but habits of incorrectness. The pupil, accustomed to failures and mistakes, is hardened into indifference; he loses the greatest incentive to study,—the pleasure of understanding his lessons; becomes careless, mischievous, disobedient; draws down upon himself the displeasure of the teacher, perhaps punishment; has all his associations established, adverse to learning; looks for pleasure elsewhere; is disgusted with the school; and, as soon as possible, forfeits its privileges by abandonment,—the victim of irregular attendance.

The previous half day, when a child expects to be absent, and the half day after he has been so, are worth but little, even with good

scholars. A child must have an almost inconceivable love of the school to desire to be there, when he knows that his ignorance of the lessons is to be put in direct and public contrast with the knowledge of his class mates; and he must have an almost incredible love of knowledge to derive any gratification from the broken fragments of it, which he can obtain at these irregular intervals. The spirit of pride, which would prompt him to stay away from the final examination of the school, lest he should be questioned upon parts of a study, which he had never seen, or upon parts dependent upon what he had never seen, would promise as much for the character of the future man, as the spirit of indifference that could tamely bear the exposure.

Irregularity of attendance in any one member of a class, is an act of injustice to every other member of it. After an absence, whether longer or shorter, the pupil, on his return, must inevitably learn his lessons in a very imperfect manner. He occupies double his share of the time at a recitation, he requires double the amount of explanations from the teacher, and these explanations having been previously given, are not necessary for the others. Hence, the absent scholars are a perpetual clog upon the class. The advanced body must wait, while the laggards are coming up; and thus not only the absentees themselves, but the reputation of the teacher, the condition of the school, the character of the district, are all made to suffer the consequences of the guilt of unnecessary absence.

The effects of a want of punctuality, though less in extent, are similar in kind; co-existing, they are a mutual aggravation.

REMEDIES FOR LATE AND IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE.

The first thing to be done, is, to render the schoolhouse, both by its external appearance, and its internal conveniences, a place of attraction;—or, at any rate, to prevent it from being a place, odious to the sight, and painful to the bodies and limbs of the pupils. The excuses and contrivances of children to stay away from a repulsive, unhealthy schoolhouse, seem to be preventives, which Nature, in her wise economy, has provided, to escape the infliction of permanent evils.

The teacher can do much, in various ways, to diminish the cases of absence and tardiness. When the question is debated, at the evening fire-side, or at the breakfast table, whether a child shall stay at home, or go to school; the child has a voice and a vote, and often the casting vote in its decision. If he loves the school, he will be an able advocate for the expediency of attending it. If errands, or any little household services are to be done, the child will rise an hour earlier, or sit up an hour later, or bestir himself with greater activity to accomplish them that he may attend the school. For this object, he will forego a family holiday, postpone the reception or the making of a visit, endure summer's heat, or brave winter's cold. On the contrary, if the pupil looks towards the school with aversion; if his heart sinks within him, when the name of the teacher is mentioned, or his image is excited, then every pretence for absence will be magnified, and invention will be active in fabricating excuses. In the former case, he would almost feign to be well when he was sick; here, he will feign to be sick when he is well. Hence it will very often happen, that the pleas or excuses of the pupil himself will determine the question of going or staying; and it depends primarily upon the teacher which way this steady and powerful bias shall incline.

During the first part of the school term, and while the habits of the pupils are forming, a skillful teacher may do much towards inspiring a laudable pride in the scholars, in regard to constancy and promptness. He can cause a public opinion to be spread through the school, that absence or tardiness, without the strongest reasons, is a stigma on the delinquent, a dishonorable abandonment of the post of duty. When errors are committed, or difficulties felt, in consequence of either of these causes, he can point out the relation between the cause and its effect, and warn against a repetition. To save the feelings of a child who comes late, or after a half day's absence, and renders a valid excuse, he can acquit him before the school, of the apparent neglect. He can refer to the state of the Register in a brief remark at the close of the day; taking occasion, if the attendance is full, to commend the scholars for it,—to express his regret and mortification, if it is not;—but always so measuring and tempering his blame and his praise, that none shall be disheartened by the severity of the former, and that the latter shall not become valueless by its superabundance. If regularity and punctuality could be secured, during a four months' school, by expending an entire week in this way, at its beginning, the loss would be repaid, seven-fold, before its close. If the teachers have not consideration enough to speak, on these subjects, to their pupils; how can they expect that the pupils, unprompted, will originate proper views concerning their importance?

There is one act of justice, which a teacher, who demands punctuality, should never fail of rendering: Let him observe the golden rule, and when he demands punctuality of his pupils, be punctual himself,—punctual, not only in the hour of commencing his school, but in the hour of closing it. Pupils have a sense of justice on this subject;—if the regular intermission is an hour, and the afternoon session commences at one o'clock, they want to be dismissed at 12. In this respect, let the teacher bestow what he demands, and enforce his precept by his example;—or, at least, when the morning or the evening hour arrives for dismissing the school, let him bring its exercises to a pause, and give his pupils an option to retire or to remain. Years of mere talk

are often lost upon children, while a practical lesson is never without its effect.

Some teachers have adopted the plan of sending to the parents and guardians of all the scholars, weekly reports, or cards, containing an account of all cases of absence or tardiness. In some instances, these cards contain, also, a description of the quality of recitations, of the general deportment of the children, or whatever else the teacher desires the parent or guardian to be acquainted with.

To secure a prompt attendance at the opening of the school, each half day, some teachers make it their practice, during the first five or ten minutes of the school, to have an exercise in vocal music, or to relate some useful and instructive anecdote, or to read an interesting incident from a biography, or to give a description of a curious fact in natural history; or, where there is apparatus, to perform, occasionally, a striking experiment, and explain to what department of business or the arts it is related;—to show the pupils, for instance, that, in an exhausted receiver, a feather falls as rapidly as a stone; that without air, gunpowder will not burn; how a steam-engine is made, or a rainbow formed. Why should all the curiosity of children be pent up for months, to vent itself at last, on the occasion of rare-shows, circus-riding, or militia musters?

The teacher ought also to visit the parents of children who attend irregularly, and kindly and affectionately to expostulate with them on the irremediable injury they are inflicting on their offspring, both by the time they lose, and the bad habits they form.

In several of the larger towns in the State, the school committees have enacted positive regulations, excluding for the forenoon or afternoon session, all who come late; and for the residue of the term, all who are absent, unless from sickness or some other disabling cause, for a fixed number of days, or half days. There may be some objections to this course,—such as the fact, that truant-dispositioned boys, may contrive to be absent the requisite number of days, or half days, for the purpose of being excluded afterwards; but almost any other evil is less than the combined influence of the innumerable throng that follow in the train of a general irregularity and tardiness. For most of the scholars, this last mentioned method is very effectual. It is the practice of many of the lyceums in the State to close the doors of the lecture room at a given hour; and rail-road cars and steam-boats have a fixed time for starting,—the consequence of which is that every body is punctual; and, were all the gains of this punctuality added together, it would be found, that years of time are saved, daily, by the regulation.

Some towns, in order to bring the force of a pecuniary motive to bear upon the subject, distribute the school money among the districts, not in the ratio of the children, between four and sixteen years of age, but in the ratio of their attendance upon the schools.

Although teachers as a body, can do more than any other class in the community to abate the evils of inconstant and tardy attendance; although school committees can do something through the instrumentality of school regulations, and even towns can make their appropriations of money subserve the same end; yet neither of these, nor all of them united, can complete the work. The final, authoritative decision, in each case, rests with parents. They, therefore, should be appealed to with the most earnest and importunate solicitations, not to be guilty of so great cruelty to their own children, or of so great injustice towards the teacher and towards their neighbors, as to cause or suffer those children, except in cases of imperative necessity, to be absent from the school, a single day of the term, or a single hour of the day. From time immemorial, in all schools, truancy has been regarded as a high offence in a pupil, and forbidden under the sanction of severe corporal punishment; but it is difficult to see why an unnecessary absence from school, at the pleasure of the child, is worse than an unnecessary absence, at the pleasure of the parent. The real cause of the difficulty must be, that parents are not aware of its existence, and of the manifold mischiefs it involves. Until recently, even the well-informed friends of education were not apprized of its magnitude; as, before the use of the Register, no authentic means of making it known, existed. The diffusion of a knowledge, both of the fact and of its consequences, cannot fail to produce a remedy; and for this purpose, as I have elsewhere suggested, the reading of the Abstracts, at meetings of the inhabitants of the districts convened at the schoolhouse, or other convenient place; the circulation of their contents by means of lectures and newspapers; the visitation of negligent parents, by the teachers and by the committees, together with conversations, held on all proper occasions, by those who know more of the subject, with those who know less, will be rapid and effectual means of conveying the information to the very individuals who need it, and must lead, in the end, to a much-needed reform. It is surprising and cheering to know what can be done by the combined and harmonious exertions of all, to accomplish this object. There were many families of children, last winter, who did not miss a single day in their attendance; and in one school, although the roads were almost impassable from snow, there was scarcely the absence of a scholar, during the whole school term.

If the school is to continue four months, and parents or guardians cannot send their children more than two or three, let them be sent continuously, while they are sent at all, and taken wholly from school, the residue of the time. Six weeks of constant attendance is better

than three months scattered promiscuously over a four months' school. So if nine o'clock comes too early in the morning for punctual attendance, let the school begin at ten, or even at half past ten. Almost any thing is better for children than to form the pernicious habit of tardiness, which in regard to the rights of others, has all the practical effects of dishonesty, and varies but a shade from it, in the motive.

EXAMINATION OF SCHOOLS.

No teacher can be so entirely dead to the reputation he is to leave behind him, as not to desire the favorable appearance of his school, at its close. But where the scholars have been put upon the acquisition of no *real* knowledge, during the first part of the term, it is still practicable for them to master a little *verbal* knowledge, during the last. And, hence, it sometimes happens that previous to the close of the school, in order to atone for the neglect of all the other powers of the mind, the faculty for remembering words is put on double duty. A few lessons are selected for the respective classes, on which they are daily drilled, with a tacit and mutual understanding on the part of teacher and classes, that, on the day of examination, these are to be displayed as specimens of the pupils' general attainments. Viewed as an intellectual exercise, the utter hollowness and mockery of such a proceeding, entitle it to the severest condemnation; but regarded in a moral light, it is premeditated and egregious fraud. Under pretence of a sample, whose very name imports that it is similar to, and a part of, the main body or bulk; it palms off the most valueless of all things,—an empty form of words,—for one of the most valuable of all,—substantial knowledge. The most iniquitous part of this proceeding, however, consists in its enticing the children themselves, to become voluntary participants in the deception. It would be far less deplorable, were the fraud practiced *for* them, instead of *by* them. But though their consciences would revolt at it, if it were presented in its true character and odiousness, yet as it is presented in so disguised and alluring a shape, they are readily seduced to become partners in the conspiracy. The offence has the double aggravation, that, in regard to knowledge, it gives words for things; while, in regard to dishonesty, it teaches the thing itself.

Against the continuance of this useless and immoral practice, wherever it exists; against its introduction, wherever it threatens; the school committee are our legally constituted defenders and protectors. At their first visitation of the school, they can explain to both teacher and scholars, that all knowledge is for use, and not for show; that books are to be regarded as means only, and not as ends; that the mind is to gain ability or power by the exercise of its faculties, as well as a knowledge of facts by the aid of memory; that the value of the school consists in its preparation of the scholars to enter upon the sober business, the momentous scenes, the solemn duties of life, but in no degree upon its enabling them to make a supposed brilliant display for five or ten minutes, at the end of the term. By a clear and strong exposition of these ideas, at the first visitation of the school, and by giving notice that they shall take the final examination, substantially, into their own hands, both teacher and scholars will be apprized of the grand destination, which they are to keep perpetually in view, and of the course of study, by which alone it can be reached. At the monthly and other intermediate visitations, let the advice given, and the questions proposed, be directed to the same points; and, at the closing examination, let little reference be made to the school books, but let the whole investigation take a practical character. To test the knowledge of the upper classes, one member of the committee can produce a promissory note, having numerous endorsements, and give it to a class in arithmetic, that the interest may be cast; another may give the minutes of a deed of land, where the premises are set out by courses and distances, and direct another class to plot it, and calculate its quantity in acres; or he may demand the superficial measurement of the floor of the school room, or the cubic contents of a given pile of wood, or quarry of marble or granite; another class may be called on to explain how it happens, that, while the equatorial diameter of the earth is twenty-six miles longer than its polar diameter, yet the river Mississippi, which rises not far from 50° N. latitude, runs south into the Gulf of Mexico, and the river Amazon, one branch of which rises near 30° S. latitude, runs northwardly, and falls into the Atlantic, so that the mouths of both these rivers are much farther from the centre of the earth in a direct line, than either of the poles are;—or to explain why the inhabitants who live within the tropics, have two winters and two summers, each year, while those who live in the temperate and frigid zones have but one, and so forth and so forth;—of course varying the subject-matter, and the difficulty of the questions, according to the general standing of each class. If such a course of direction and of examination, could be pursued for a few years, the character of many of our schools would be vastly improved, and the deception of show-examinations be forever abolished. If I were the commander of an army, and should expect to fight a pitched battle, to-morrow, I might feel justified in appealing to the strongest motives—forces in each officer and soldier under my command;—in showing to the ambitious that there would be an opportunity for the display of bravery, and to the timid, that their greatest safety was in the vigor of the onset;—in calling up visions of honor, of country and of home for the patriotic, and inspiring the conscientious with stronger feelings of duty,—and thus, running around the whole circle of the predominant motives, make all conspire to the production of my immediate

aim. But in a school, where the object is to prepare, not for to-morrow, but for life,—not for a single exploit, but for character, the very opposite of this course is often necessary. If any faculty or impulse of a pupil is so strong that it threatens to grow into a deformity;—if any faculty or impulse is so weak that the future character will be unbalanced, unless the deficient power be cultivated into a symmetrical proportion with others, then the strong should be repressed, and the weak should be fostered,—during the whole school, if need be,—however much the season of recitation, or the day of exhibition may suffer. That education is false, which sacrifices the well-being of the future to the eclat of a passing hour.

LOCAL OR TOWN SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.

During the last year, an event, worthy of special notice, has occurred, in relation to the supervisory part of our school system. I refer to an appropriation by the town of Springfield of the sum of \$1000 as a salary for a superintendent of their schools, to be selected and appointed by the town committee. In that town, as in a considerable number of others in the State, the schools are so numerous, and their terms so long, that if one person were to visit a school, each working day in the year, the number of days would be too few to complete the circuit of visitations, as required by law. Where the legal number of visitations is so great, and the duty of making them is devolved upon men engaged in professional, or in common avocations, it is impossible to avoid a competition between the private business of the committee man, and the public duty of visitation; and, where this competition exists, there is always danger that the former will triumph in the rivalry. Nor can it be denied, that one, whose whole time and talents are devoted to the interests of the schools,—to an examination and selection of text books, to the introduction of improved processes in teaching, and of better modes of governing;—in fine, to a more thorough acquaintance with the great subject of education, in its principles, and in its practical details, would be far better qualified for the discharge of his duties, than if those duties were only an occasional employment, and collateral to his main pursuits. Guided by these views, the committee of Springfield, in their last annual report, recommended the appointment of a superintendent of the schools. The town adopted the recommendation; but owing to some unavoidable delays, the gentleman who was appointed did not enter upon the duties of his office, until a considerable portion of the current school year had elapsed. It is obvious, that the success of this measure will mainly depend upon the competency of the officer chosen to execute it. That success is most earnestly to be desired; and, I may add, is reasonably to be anticipated. Should such be the happy result, it may be expected that the example will be followed by other towns, where the number of the schools is too large, and the engagements of the committee too engrossing, to permit a full compliance with the law, both as to the number and the quality of the visitations. The neighboring city of Providence, which, within the last two years, has established a system of public schools upon the most liberal foundation, has incorporated the office of superintendent into her general plan; and, under the auspices of a gentleman,* in every respect admirably qualified for the station; her schools are making very rapid improvement.

MANIFESTATION OF PARENTAL INFLUENCE.

Sovereign, reigning over and above all other influences upon the school, is, or rather might be, that of the parents. The father, when presiding at his table, or returning home at evening, from the labors of the day,—the mother, in that intercourse with her children which begins with the waking hour of the morning, and lasts until the hour of sleep, enjoy a continuing opportunity, by arranging the affairs of the household in such a way as to accommodate the hours of the school; by subordinating the little interests or conveniences of the family to the paramount subject of regular and punctual attendance; by manifesting such an interest in the studies of each child, that he will feel a daily responsibility, as well as a daily encouragement in regard to his lessons; by foregoing an hour of useless amusement, or a call of ceremony, in order to make a visit to the school; by inviting the teacher to the house, and treating him, not as a hireling, but as a wiser friend; by a conscientious care in regard to their conversation about the school, and their award of praise or blame;—in fine, by all those countless modes, which parental affection, when guided by reason, will make delightful to themselves,—the parents can inspire their offspring with a love of knowledge, a habit of industry, a sense of decorum, a respect for manliness of conduct and dignity of character, prophetic of their future usefulness, and happiness and honor.

For one who has not traversed the State, and made himself actually acquainted with the condition of the schools, by personal inspection and inquiry, it is impossible fully to conceive the contrast they now present. I have no hope, therefore, of making myself adequately understood, when I say, that in contiguous towns, and even in contiguous districts, activity and paralysis,—it is hardly too much to say, life and death,—are to be found, side by side. Wherever a town or a district has been blessed with a few men, or even with a single man, who had intellect to comprehend the bearings of this great subject, and a spirit to labor in the work, there a revolution in

*Nathan Bishop, Esq.

public sentiment has been effected, or is now going on. In some districts, last winter, the prosperity of the school became a leading topic of conversation among the neighbors; the presence of visitors from day to day, cheered the scholars; a public spirit grew up among them, animating to exertion, and demanding courteous, honorable, just behavior;—the consequence of which was, that, by a law as certain as that light comes with the rising of the sun, a proficiency surpassing all former example was made; and when the schools drew to a close, a crowd of delighted spectators attended the final examination, which from the interest and the pleasure of the scene was prolonged into the night. In some places, the visitors who did not come early to this examination, could not obtain admittance on account of the crowded state of the house; and, in one, although a cold and driving snow storm lasted through the day, yet a hundred parents attended, whom the inclemency of the weather could not deter from being present, to celebrate this harvest-home of knowledge and virtue;—while, on the same occasion, in an adjoining town, perhaps in a bordering district, a solitary committee man dropped grudgingly in, to witness a half hour of mechanical movements, got up as a mock representation of knowledge, and to look at the half-emptied benches of the school room made vacant by deserters. These differences are not imaginary; they are real, and their proximate cause is, the interest or the want of interest, manifested by the parents towards the schools.

It is a celebrated saying of the French philosopher and educationist, Cousin, that "as is the teacher, so is the school." In regard to France and Prussia, where the schools depend so much upon the authority of the government, and so little upon the social influences of the neighborhood where they exist, this brief saying is the embodiment of an important truth; but with our institutions, there is far less reason for giving it the currency and force of a proverb. Here, every thing emanates from the people; they are the original; all else is copy. If, therefore, the transatlantic maxim, which identifies the character of the school with that of the teacher, be introduced amongst us, it must be with the addition, that "as are the parents, so are both teacher and school."

A visit to the school by the parents produces a salutary effect upon themselves. Although it is feeling which originates and sends forth conduct, yet conduct rests powerfully upon feeling; and, therefore, if parents could be induced to commence the performance of this duty, they would soon find it not only delightful in itself, but demanded by the force of habit. Nor is there any excuse for their neglect, that they are incapable, in point of literary attainments, of examining the school, or of deciding upon the accuracy of recitations. If they have no knowledge to bestow in instruction, they all have sympathy to give in encouragement. Indeed, the children must be animated to exertion, before they will make any valuable or lasting attainment. This animation the parents can impart, and thus become the means of creating a good, they do not themselves possess.

It is surprising that the sagacity of parental love does not discover that a child, whose parents interest the teacher in his welfare, will be treated much better in school, than he otherwise would be; and this too, without the teacher's incurring the guilt of partiality. If the teacher is made acquainted with the peculiarities of the child's disposition, he will be able to manage him more judiciously, and therefore more successfully, than he otherwise could; he will be able to approach the child's mind through existing avenues, instead of roughly forcing a new passage to it; and thus, in many instances, to supersede punishment by mild measures. A wise physician always desires to know the constitution and habit of his patient, before he prescribes for his malady; and a parent who should call a medical practitioner to administer to a sick child, but should refuse to give him this information, would be accounted insane. But are the maladies of the mind less latent, and subtle, and elusive than those of the body; and is a less degree of peril to be apprehended, in the former case than in the latter, from the prescriptions of ignorance? I have been credibly informed of a case, where a child received a severe chastisement in school, for not reading distinctly, when the articulateness was occasioned by a natural impediment in his organs of speech. The parent sent the child to school without communicating this fact to the teacher, and, under the circumstances of the case, the teacher mistook the involuntary defect for natural obstinacy. This may seem an extreme case, and one not likely to happen, but doubtless, hundreds of similar, though less discoverable ones, in regard to some mental, or moral deficiency, are daily occurring. Again, if parents do not visit the school, until at, or near its close, they may then discover errors or evils, whose consequences might have been foreseen on an earlier visit, and thus prevented. It is another fact, eminently worthy of parental consideration, that many young and timid children, unaccustomed to see persons not belonging to the family, are almost paralyzed when first brought into the presence of strangers. An excessive diffidence cripples their limbs and benumbs all their senses; and it is only by their being gradually familiarized to company, that the fetters of embarrassment can be stripped off, and the shy, downcast countenance be uplifted. After a few years of neglect, this awkwardness and shame-facedness, becomes irremediable; they harden the whole frame, as it were, into a petrification, and their victim always finds himself bereft of his faculties, at the very moment when he has most need of freedom and vigor, in their exercise. On the other hand, pert, forward, self-esteem-

ing children, who are unaccustomed to the equitable reciprocities of social intercourse, commit the opposite error of becoming rude, aggressive, and disdainful, whenever brought into contact with society. Now, one of the best remedies or preventives which children can enjoy, both for this disabling bashfulness, and for this spirit of effrontery, is the meeting of visitors in school, where, a previous knowledge of what the occasion demands, helps them to behave in a natural manner, notwithstanding the consciousness that others are present; and where they are relieved from the double embarrassment of thinking both what they are to do, and how it should be done. Especially is it necessary, that mothers should accompany sensitive and timid children, when they first go to school, to obviate a distrust of the teacher, or a fear of other children, which might otherwise infix in the mind a permanent repugnance to the place. Whatever confers upon the school a single attraction, or removes from it one feature of harshness, clears the avenue for a more ready transmission of knowledge into the pupils' minds.

BREAKING UP OF SCHOOLS.

The breaking up of schools is a most serious evil, and one of not very infrequent occurrence. It happens from two causes. One is the literary incapacity of the teacher to instruct. Where teachers are guilty of the illegal and dishonorable practice of smuggling themselves into a school, without having obtained a certificate of qualification; or, where the committee have granted such certificate without due scrutiny into the attainments of the candidate, the school term rarely closes, without giving demonstration of the great truth, that, in the long run, it is always impolitic as well as wrong, to swerve from principle. The school is either broken up, through the manifest incompetency of the teacher; or, what is still worse, it is prolonged through a diseased existence, every day of which originates and scatters among the pupils, the infection of bad mental habits. The only remedy for this branch of the evil is to be found in the previous preparation of teachers, and in the conscientious discharge of duty by the examining committee.

The other cause of the breaking up of schools, is the open and successful resistance made by the scholars to the authority of the teacher. It is not all the scholars, however, in any school, who are implicated in this offence. The reports of the committees, for the last two years, have not disclosed a single instance, where the girls belonging to the school have caused its violent termination, or even participated in fomenting an insurrectionary spirit. Nor, among the boys, is it the younger who are ungovernable. A spirit of disobedience in them can generally be quelled by superior physical force, where it is not subdued by the infinitely better methods of kindness, persuasion, and an enlightenment of the sense of duty. There is, then, but one other class of scholars, on whom the accusation can fall, of instigating and executing a successful rebellion; and, to any man who has any adequate conception of the value and excellence of propriety and decency in conduct, and of the universal necessity of order and law in the management of affairs, it must be a source of immeasurable regret, that this class should, without exception, consist of the *larger and older boys of the school*. It must be a source of immeasurable regret, that, at the very time when we begin to look to these young men for a self-regulating power, for decorous and gentlemanly behaviour, for a thoughtful and dignified anticipation of the great duties of life, which lie so immediately before them;—that, at this time, we should find them recklessly engaging in a course, which involves in its catalogue of wrongs, not only the squandering away of the last few running sands of their school-going life, and the exhibition of a most baneful example before the junior members of the school; but also the crime of ingratitude towards parents, friends and townsmen, who, at great expense, have placed within their reach the inestimable privileges of education.

INFLUENCES NECESSARY TO A GOOD SCHOOL.

We have no other institution, where such a confluence of favorable influences is necessary to the production of the desired result; nor have we any, whose usefulness is so liable to be impaired, or even destroyed, by a single adverse tendency. A long train of measures is requisite to accomplish the end, and a failure in any one of the series, is ruin. If the schoolhouse be bad, in regard to its location or internal construction, then, not only will the improvement in the children's minds be materially lessened, but the healthiness of their bodies will be exposed to continual danger. If the house be otherwise well built, but deficient in the single requisite of ventilation, two thirds of all the intellectual power of the children will be destroyed, at the very moment when they are called upon to exercise it. In the whole range of science, no fact is better established, than that the breathing of impure air benumbs and stupifies every faculty; and therefore, to call upon children to study, or understand, or remember, while we give them impure air for breathing, is as absurd as to put fetters upon their limbs, when we wish them to run swiftly; or to interpose an opaque body between their eyes, and any object which we wish them to see clearly. But if the schoolhouse be the best that art can build, yet if the town grants only penurious supplies of money, the school will but just begin, when the means of supporting it will end. This is the false economy of saving in the seed, though thirty or sixty, or a hundred

fold be lost in the harvest. Even where the town makes liberal grants of money, in proportion to its valuation and census, still, if it has unwisely divided its territory into minute districts, it defeats its own liberality; for, by attempting to support so many schools, with disproportionate means, it gives an efficient support to none. But with a good schoolhouse, and with such large and populous districts, or union districts; as give the multiplying power of union and concert to individual action; still, the employment of a bad teacher will vitiate the whole; and the place will have been prepared, and the money appropriated, only to gather the children into a receptacle, where bad feelings and passions, bad language and manners, will ferment into corruption;—and without a good prudential and superintending committee, the chance of securing the services of a good teacher becomes so small as to elude even a fractional expression. And again; if the most perfect teacher is obtained, still the scholars must be brought within the circle of his influence in order to be benefited; and, therefore, absence, irregularity and tardiness, must be prevented, or the good teacher will have been employed in vain. Let all other influences be propitious, and the single circumstance of which so little has been thought, viz., a diversity of class books for scholars of similar ages and attainments will derange every operation of the school; because no perseverance, no fertility of resources on the part of the teacher, can carry it forward, if each pupil brings a different book. The obstacle defies human genius. All that reciprocal aid and stimulus is lost, which the different minds of a class afford each other, when they have once been awakened, and their attention turned upon the same point. To expect progress, under this embarrassment, is as unreasonable as it would be for a singing-master to expect concord of sounds, when all his pupils were singing simultaneously from different notes. Even if all the preceding arrangements and appointments are perfect, it will yet be true, that not one half of the capabilities of the school will be developed, unless the parents breathe life into the children before they leave their own door, and send them to school hungering and thirsting after knowledge.

Now all these various agencies must work in concert, or they work in vain. When a system is so numerous in its parts, and so complex in its structure; when the nice adjustment of each, and the harmonious working of all, are necessary to the perfection of the product; all who are engaged in its operation, must not only have a great extent of knowledge, but they must be bound together by a unity of purpose. Experience has often proved how fatally powerful one ill-disposed person can be, in destroying the value of a school; but experience is yet to prove, what an amount of corporeal and material well-being, of social enjoyment, of intellectual dominion and majesty, of moral purity and fervor,—what an amount, in fine, of both temporal and spiritual blessedness, this institution, in the providence of God, may be the means of conferring upon the race.

CITIES AND LARGE TOWNS.

The condition of the common schools in the large towns of Massachusetts is altogether in advance of what it is in the large towns of other States. The expenditures in their behalf are more liberal, the gradation of schools more perfect, the course of instruction more complete, the supervision of committees and co-operation of parents more thorough, the compensation and qualification of teachers higher, and the attendance of children of the proper school age more numerous, leaving of course a smaller proportion in private schools, or in no school. But this desirable state of things has only been brought about by untiring efforts on the part of individuals, and by incorporating from time to time such modifications in the system and course of instruction as the progress of society called for. We give a brief account of the condition of the public schools in some of these towns.

BOSTON.

Population,	80,325
Number of persons over 4 and under 16,	17,840
Number of scholars in public schools,	10,766
Average attendance,	8,871
Average wages paid per month to teachers—males,	\$104.55
“ “ “ “ “ “ females,	20.82
Amount of money raised by tax for teachers' wages and fuel,	\$90,458 76
Whole amount raised by tax for schools in 1839,	\$115,000 00

The above statistics are taken from the Massachusetts Abstract of School returns for 1839-40. The following account is from the Boston Almanac for 1840, and refers to the condition of the schools in 1839.

Public Schools.

These Schools are the pride and glory of Boston, and date their origin almost as far back as the first settlement of the town. So early as April 15, 1635, we find, among other proceedings of a public meeting, that "Likewise it was then generally agreed upon, that our Brother Philemon Purmont shall be intreated to become Scholemaster for the Teaching and Nourtering of children with us." The interest in education, exhibited at this early period, has been continued to the present day.

The whole number of Schools, supported at the expense of the city is one hundred and seven. Of these, ninety-one are Primary Schools, fourteen are English Grammar and Writing Schools, one an English High School, and one a Latin School.

The Primary Schools are for children of both sexes, between four and seven years of age, and are under the care of a Committee, consisting of ninety-three gentlemen, each of whom (excepting two) has the particular supervision of one School. The Schools are arranged in ten Districts, besides two at East Boston, and one on the Western Avenue. The Schools in each District are under the special care of the Committee of that District. They were established in the year 1818, by a vote of the Town, which appropriated five thousand dollars, for the expenses of the first year. Since that time, the number has increased to ninety-one, and the annual expenses are about twenty-eight thousand dollars, exclusive of the cost of School-houses, of which the greater number are owned by the city, having been erected specially for these Schools, at an average cost of about three thousand dollars for each building, accommodating two Schools.

The Primary Schools are visited and examined, once a month, by their Committees, and semi-annually, by the Standing Committee of the whole Board. At the semi-annual examination, in November, 1839, there were present four thousand four hundred and eighty-three pupils, and absent, nine hundred and nineteen, making the whole number, belonging, five thousand four hundred and two, averaging fifty-nine and one third to each School. During the preceding six months, they had been examined by the Committee three hundred and seventy-five times, and visited five hundred and twenty-eight times; being an average of more than four examinations, and about six visits, to each School, for the six months.

The Primary Schools are taught by females, who receive an annual salary of two hundred and fifty dollars. They maintain a very high rank, and children are taught in them to read fluently, and spell correctly, and have imparted to them, a knowledge of the elementary principles of arithmetic, and other things, with which children of their age ought to be made acquainted.

and having been found that there were many children in the city, too old for the Primary Schools, and not qualified for the English Grammar Schools, the City Council, in 1838, authorized the Primary School Committee to receive such children into one School in each District and by the semi-annual report of the examination, in November, 1839, it appears, that there were then, in the Schools, one thousand and ninety-one children over seven years of age, many of whom were of this latter description.

At seven years of age, if able to read fluently, and spell correctly, the pupils receive from the Primary School Committee, a certificate of admission to the English Grammar Schools, on the first Mondays of April and October. Other children, from seven to fourteen years of age, able to read easy prose, may be admitted on the first Monday of every month, having been first examined by the Grammar Master. In these Schools, they are allowed to remain, till the next annual exhibition, after the boys have arrived at the age of fourteen, and the girls at the age of sixteen.

"In these Schools, are taught the common branches of an English education. In the several buildings, where the arrangement is complete, there are two large halls, occupied by two Departments, one of which is a Grammar School, and the other a Writing School. The scholars are organized in two divisions. While one division attends the Grammar School, the other attends the Writing School; thus the two masters exchange scholars half-daily. In the Grammar Department, the pupils are taught, chiefly, Spelling, Reading, English Grammar, and Geography; in the Writing Department, they are taught Writing, Arithmetic, and Book-keeping." The Johnson and Winthrop Schools are each under the charge of one Master, "who is responsible for the state of his School, in all its departments."

There are two Schools, for pupils who pursue more advanced studies than are attended to in the English Grammar Schools. The English High School was instituted in 1821, for the purpose of furnishing young men, "who are not intended for a collegiate course of study, and who have enjoyed the usual advantages of the other public schools, with the means of completing a good English education." Pupils are admitted at twelve years of age, and may remain three years.

In this School, instruction is given "in the elements of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, with their application to the sciences and the arts, in Grammar, Rhetoric, and Belles Lettres, in Moral Philosophy, in History, Natural and Civil, and in the French Language. This Institution is furnished with a valuable mathematical and philosophical apparatus, for the purpose of experiment and illustration."

The Latin School was commenced in 1635. Pupils are received into it, at ten years of age, and may continue five years. They are

here taught the rudiments of the Latin and Greek languages, and fully qualified for the most respectable colleges. Instruction is also given in the higher branches of the Mathematics, and in Geography, History, Declamation, and English Composition.

The English Grammar, High, and Latin, Schools are under the care of a Committee, consisting of the Mayor, President of the Common Council, and two gentlemen elected in each Ward, making twenty-six in all. They are divided into sub-committees of three, for each of the Grammar Schools, and five each, for the Latin and English High Schools. At the annual exhibition, in August, silver medals are awarded to the six best scholars in each School. Those for the boys are called the Franklin medals, being given from a fund left for that purpose, by Dr. Franklin. The boys, to whom they are awarded, are invited to partake of the annual school-dinner in Faneuil Hall.

The sixteen School-houses, for the English Grammar, Latin, and High Schools, were erected by the city, for their accommodation, and are estimated to be worth, on an average, twenty thousand dollars each, being an aggregate of three hundred and fifty thousand dollars, equal to about one fourth of the city debt. The annual expense of these Schools are about seventy-six thousand dollars, making the sums annually expended by the city, for education solely, about one hundred and sixteen thousand dollars, one fourth of the annual taxes of the city. The whole amount expended for Education, in the Public and Private Schools, is not less than two hundred and twenty-four thousand dollars annually.

Thus are the means provided, at the public expense, for the gratuitous instruction of every child in the city, from the first rudiments of education, to the highest branches necessary to be known by those who do not desire a collegiate course of instruction. Indeed, the standard of education in these Schools is equal to that of many Colleges in the country. There is no feature of our institutions, of which our citizens are so justly proud; none, the expenses of which are so cheerfully borne.

In addition to the Public Schools, there are in the city, one hundred and thirteen private seminaries, containing one thousand two hundred and eighty-seven boys, and two thousand and eighty-two girls, in all three thousand three hundred and sixty-nine pupils, instructed at an aggregate annual expense of one hundred and ten thousand dollars.

HISTORY OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

The establishment of primary schools for children between the ages of 7 and 14 in 1818, is the most important step in the improvement of the public school system of Boston. This was effected mainly by the efforts of Elisha Ticknor, father of Prof. George Ticknor.

Elisha Ticknor was born at Lebanon in this state in 1757, where he resided till 1774, when he removed with his father to New-Hampshire, and commenced the settlement of a town which they called Lebanon that still bears the same name. He subsequently removed to Boston and was Principal of the Free Grammar School at the south end, till 1795. He left this post on account of impaired health, but continued to take an active interest in the public schools of the city. So early as 1805 he called the attention of his friends to the neglected condition of the young children, especially among the poor. By the then existing regulations of the public schools, these schools were not open to children under 7 years of age, and to those only who could read in plain English lessons. This amount of instruction could be readily given in the family by educated mothers, or in schools supported at the expense of those who were able and willing to pay for such instruction. But for the children of the poor, the uneducated or the unwilling, there was no provision, and the consequence was that a large number of the youthful population of the city were growing up without any education. It was not till in May 1818, that assisted by Hon. James Savage (who is still living and who needs no other mention to cause him to be remembered with gratitude by the poor of his own and other cities, than that he was the author in 1817 of the first "Institution for Savings") he was able to induce the select-men of Boston to insert an article in the warrant for the town meeting in June, to see if the citizens would authorize the opening of a school at the public expense, for children under the age of seven years. In this meeting held on the 11th of June 1818, five thousand dollars was voted for that year, to begin the experiment, and a committee of about twenty five appointed to superintend the enterprise. Of this Committee Mr. Ticknor was Chairman and continued to hold that post of labor and responsibility to these schools, till his death in 1821. The proposition was opposed in the outset principally on the ground of expense, as every step for improvement of common education there and elsewhere has always experienced. In the second year an addition of fifty per cent. was made to the town appropriations and almost every year since the grant from

the public treasury has increased to meet the expenditures for teachers and buildings.

In 1818-19, eighteen primary schools were established.

In 1827 there were 56 schools in operation, with 3236 children at an annual expense of \$14,000.

In 1834 there were 63 schools, and 4000 scholars at an expense of \$16,859.16.

In 1839 there were 93 schools, and 5402 scholars at an expense of \$28,000.

LOWELL.

Lowell is an instance of what may be done under great disadvantages to maintain a broad and generous system of public schools.

Population in 1840,	20,981
Number of persons over 4 and under 16,	3,995
Number of scholars, in summer 2,818, in winter,	2,781
Number of different scholars during the year over	4,000
Average number at school,	2,695
Number of schools of all grades,	29
Amount raised by tax for current expenses,	\$16,500
Amount expended on schoolhouses in 1840,	\$48,000
Number in private schools,	235
Expense of private schools,	\$2,555

The public schools are divided into three grades, viz: twenty-two primary schools; six grammar schools; and one high school, and all of them maintained by direct tax on the whole city. The primary schools are taught entirely by females, and receive children under seven years of age and until they are qualified for admission to the grammar schools—the average number to each school is 60.

The grammar schools receive those who can bring a certificate, or pass an examination, in the common stops and abbreviations, and in easy reading and spelling. These schools are divided into two departments—one for boys, and the other for girls, and are taught by a male principal and assistant, two female assistants and a writing master. The number of scholars is about 200 in each department. The studies are the common branches of an English education.

The High School prepares young men for college, and carries forward the education of the young of both sexes in the studies previously pursued in the grammar schools, as well as in astronomy, practical mathematics, natural history, moral philosophy, book-keeping, composition, and the evidences of Christianity. Pupils are admitted, on examination, twice a year, in the studies of the grammar schools. There are two departments, one under a male and the other a female principal, assisted by two assistants, and a teacher of plain and ornamental penmanship.

The care and superintendence of the public schools are entrusted to a committee, not exceeding twelve, elected annually. This committee must choose a chairman, secretary, and a sub-committee for each school, with appropriate duties. The general committee elect teachers, determine their salaries, remove those who are incompetent, and make all necessary regulations respecting the studies, books, and discipline of the schools. They must meet at least once a month. The sub-committee must visit and examine into the progress of each of his particular school or schools once a month, and report at the regular meeting of the board.

No better education can be obtained in the English or in the preparatory classical studies, in any school, and the richest and best educated parents are glad to avail themselves of these public institutions. Owing to the number of Catholic families, Catholic teachers are provided in five primary and one grammar school, in parts of the city where that population predominates. This arrangement has secured the attendance of that class of children and the hearty co-operation of their clergy.

New Schoolhouse in Lowell.

The following description of one of the improved specimens of schoolhouse architecture referred to on p. 146, is from the Lowell Courier of Nov. 11, 1840.

It is situated in the centre of an oblong square, 169 by 100 feet, and extending through from Ann to Kirk street. While it is retired from the noise of Merrimack street, one of our chief thoroughfares, it is within four hundred feet of City Hall, and very central. One of the greatest recommendations of this spot is its bounding upon two streets, thus lending great facilities for carrying out the principle, which has been steadily adhered to, of separating the two sexes. They are now to enter the building from two distinct streets, the girls from Ann, and the boys from Kirk street. There is land sufficient for spacious yards for each sex, and for ornamental shrubs and trees, and the whole is enclosed with suitable fences. The lot measures 19600 feet, and costs, \$4909.50.

The building is of brick, eighty-four by forty-eight feet, and two stories in height. Its two fronts upon the streets above named, without any expensive and pretending architectural ornament, present

The whole building is warmed by two furnaces, of Bryant and Herman's patent, placed in a most ample, well lighted, and dry cellar, for fuel, &c. The cost of the building will not be far from \$11000, and that of the land and buildings, \$15,909. The general plans were furnished by a building committee, appointed in August 1839, who procured working plans from Richard Bond, Esq., of Boston, a gentleman who has proved himself, in this undertaking, as in many others of greater magnitude, a skilful and judicious architect. The erection of the building has been under the supervision of Mr. Edward Field, of this city, and we hazard little in saying that there is no part of it which will not bear the closest scrutiny, and upon which he may not venture to risk his reputation as a thorough bred and faithful mechanic.

NANTUCKET.	
Population,	9,048
Number of persons over 4 and under 16	1,822
Number of scholars in public schools,	1,550
Average attendance,	960
Amount of money raised by tax to support schools	\$17,600
Average wages paid teachers	\$64.58
" " " "	males,
" " " "	females,
	\$11.05

The *Introductory Schools* receive children at the age of 4 years, and prepares them to enter the *Primary Schools*. The instruction is

"It will cost too much." Not so much on the whole as is now paid—to say nothing of the blunders that are made by incompetent hands who have charge of the property, bodies and souls of individuals.

"There will be a rush for liberal education." At first there would, but the least competent would have to fall back from the higher intellectual pursuits upon some more simple vocation, and this would be regulated by the laws of supply and demand. Farmers will over produce potatoes at \$1 per bushel, but when they fall to a shilling the evil is cured.

"It is to soon too begin." It is, said Mr. Mann, when here, 500 years in advance of the present age. If a man has a long journey to go, it is an urgent reason that he should set out the sooner. Let, therefore, this subject be discussed at least.

"This plan will be embraced by few only." If this principle had been practised upon by the Martin Luthers of bygone days—nay—if the Blessed Redeemer himself had withheld the sacrifice from a God-offending world, because in 1840 years thereafter only 200 out of 800 millions now in existence would bow even theoretically, to say nothing of practice, at his holy shrine, where would have been the blessings of Christianity which we now enjoy?"

CHARLESTOWN.

Population,	10,101
Number of persons over 4 and under 16 years of age,	2,470
Number of scholars of all ages in public schools,	2,695
Average attendance,	1,863
Current annual expenses in 1839—40,	\$15,067 80
Special appropriations for new schoolhouses,	15,499 39
The public schools of Charlestown embrace 20 primaries under 20 female teachers, and 1930 scholars; 2 district schools under 2 teachers and 62 scholars; and 4 grammar schools with 12 teachers and 903 scholars.	

In the PRIMARY SCHOOLS children between 4 and 8 years learn to read with fluency, spell correctly, and become familiar with the multiplication table, easy common punctuation, abbreviation, &c. They also attend to singing. The following schedule will give an idea of the classification and exercise in some of the primaries.

Fifth Class.—Seldom, in a school of sixty, more than half a dozen, in this class; learning the letters.

Fourth Class.—Reading, without spelling the words, in "My First School Book" and Emerson's Introduction; spell such words as "village," "settlement," and other words of two and three syllables.

Third Class.—Read fluently in Worcester's Second Part; spelling continued; name the days, weeks, months, and seasons; name the figures.

Second Class.—Read fluently, many without leaving out any of the words, in the "Young Reader;" spell the longest words correctly; recite punctuation, abbreviations, and other lessons from "National Spelling Book;" answer promptly the multiplication table and questions in Emerson's First Part in Arithmetic.

First Class.—Read correctly in Worcester's Third Book; spell without hesitation, the hardest words in the reading books; answer promptly in Emerson's Second Part in arithmetic as far as fractions; speak dialogues and other easy pieces.

The teachers in these schools are all female, and receive on an average \$210 a year.

The DISTRICT SCHOOLS, two in number, are substantially what other district schools are all over New England, and present a mournful contrast to a well appointed system of graduated schools. They embrace children of all ages, a great variety of studies, and are taught by one teacher in summer and another in winter.

In the GRAMMAR SCHOOLS the instruction is carried forward in reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, composition, declamation, philosophy, history, geography and algebra. In two of these schools astronomy, chemistry, book-keeping and Latin and Greek languages were attended to. The principals of these schools receive each \$900, and the female assistants \$200.

The improvement of the public schools of Charlestown has led to the abandonment of nearly every private school, and this will be the consequence of improvement in public schools every where. The following extract from the Report of the School Board for 1840 shows that the committee find enough to do.

"The labors of the Board during the past year, have been of an important and difficult nature. The building of three School Houses; the repairs made on several of the old ones; the establishment of five schools; the alteration of the several school districts; the addition of backs to all the seats in the grammar schools within the Peninsula; together with the customary cares of superintendence; have comprised duties, arduous and responsible. In their performance, the Board have endeavored to act with a single eye to the immediate wants of the schools and the permanent interests of the town.

New Grammar Schoolhouse.

In 1839 the town on the recommendation of the School Board, voted to erect a schoolhouse embracing the latest improvement, and appropriated \$15,000 for this purpose. The lot includes 7630 feet.

The building is constructed of brick, 60 feet long by 40 feet wide; having a porch 32 feet by 18 feet. It is two stories high and has a basement story. It contains four rooms; two for primary schools and two for a grammar school. The basement story is divided into two apartments by a brick wall; in one apartment is a cellar in which are the furnaces; the other contains the two primary school rooms. Each of these rooms is 10 feet high, 27 feet 6 inches long and 15 feet 6 inches wide; has seats after the plan of the model school in Boston, that each scholar may have a separate seat, and will well accommodate a large school. The room in the first story is 14 feet 6 inches high, 56 feet long and 36 feet wide. It has six ventilators with openings in the ceiling, two hundred seats made with iron standards and with backs in the forms of chairs, a platform fronting the seats 5 feet wide and raised six inches above the floor, and a recitation room 10 feet 4 inches square. The room in the second story is similar to the one in the first story in dimensions, ventilation, seats and platform, is 14 feet high, and has a recitation room of 18 feet 2 inches by 10 feet 4 inches. All the rooms are warmed by Bryant and Herman's furnaces placed in the cellar and having their smoke pipes passing through the primary school rooms into the chimney flues. All the windows are supplied with green blinds. There are two entrances and yards for the grammar school, and two for the primary schools.

ROXBURY.

Population,	7,493
Number of children over 4 and under 16,	1,807
Number of scholars in public Schools,	1,122
Average attendance,	880
Amount of money raised by tax to support schools,	\$7000
Average monthly wages paid to teachers males,	\$64.07
" " " " " females,	15.88

Extract from a Letter of Rev. George Putnam.

"We have a regular gradation of schools; the system varies however somewhat in different parts of the town, our population about 8000 being very unequally distributed over a large territory. We have three villages or centres in each of which is a Grammar school for children of 8 years and upwards. In the easterly village next Boston there are two, one for each sex—the house lately erected being for boys only. Each of these four schools has a male principal, with one or more female assistants according to the number of pupils. The largest boys' school has also a male assistant.

We have 14 primary schools kept by females—pupils from 4 years to 8. These schools are scattered over town by no other rule than the convenience of the inhabitants. We have no District system, and think ourselves better off without. All the schools are in all respects subject to the care and control of the general committee. In two instances where the population is dense enough to allow it we have farther subdivided the primary schools, putting pupils from 4 years to 6 in one room, and those from 6 to 8 in another, under separate teachers, making them independent schools. We think there is much advantage in this.

The "Trustees' Grammar School" by a special act of the Legislature stands for such a school as the law requires in towns of more than 4000 inhabitants. It is a free school,—controlled by a board of trustees, who fill their own vacancies—but may be visited by the town's committee. The master receives \$1500, salary,—of which the town pays 500, as a condition on which the validity of the Act depends—the trustees having the power to renounce that Act when they please. The fund of the school is about \$20,000. It is in process of becoming a Latin school exclusively,—much on the plan of the Boston Latin School. It will have I think from 30 to 40 pupils, on that basis.

Our new school house is of brick,—The main body is 63 feet by 37½—with a pediment or porch on the longest side, 30 ft. by 12, reaching up the whole height of the building, viz. 3 stories. The two upper stories (only one is now finished and occupied) are to be school rooms of the full size of the main building. Each room capable of receiving 200 pupils. The lower story is to be divided into two rooms, for recitations,—or for medium schools. The house (exclusive of land) has cost so far, I believe about \$9000,—and a large sum will yet be required to finish the two remaining stories. The room now finished has 260 pupils, and two male and one female teacher. Our medium school is rather an anomalous affair. Whenever a school is overflowing and there is a number of pupils too old for the primary school and yet too backward to be conveniently classed in a grammar school we take some 30 to 50 of them and put them into a separate room with a female teacher as a temporary arrangement—we generally have one or two of them.

We pay our female teachers now \$200 a year,—shall probably add \$25 more next year. The male teachers have \$500, 600, 700, 900, 1500, according to the rank of the school, the labor required, the merit of the teacher, or the length of his term of service.

with all the various branches usually taught in the high schools in our land. It will be perceived, that, upon this plan, the schools of each grade have their respectively peculiar purposes to accomplish, and that the only way in which the whole work can be thoroughly done, is for each grade of schools to do well its own part. If the primary schools do not give thorough instruction in the branches assigned to them, the grammar schools cannot carry the scholars profitably on to higher branches. They will soon become mere primary schools, in fact, although bearing another name. And so too, if the grammar schools do not make the pupils familiar with the branches there required to be taught, the high school cannot accomplish the purpose for which it was organized. It should be the object then of both parents and teachers to keep the scholars in a lower school until they are well acquainted with all the branches in which instruction is there given, before they are permitted to advance to the next higher grade.

It is another object of the plan, and especially of the experiment in Female Grammar School No. 2, to make our female grammar schools, seminaries for the education of teachers, that we may have our future supply from this source. It is proposed that those among the more advanced in these schools, who are desirous of becoming teachers, shall be employed while yet they are scholars, as assistant pupils, that so they may learn the art of teaching and be fitted to take charge of a class room in some of our primary schools. If diligent and successful, while there, they will be candidates for further promotion. In this way, it is thought that our female grammar schools may become essentially seminaries for the training of teachers, and especially for making them acquainted with the system pursued in the schools of our city, and qualifying them to carry that system onward to perfection. And this is important. For as our system has its peculiar features, it is necessary for its perfection, that they should be understood by those who are to carry it forward. It is the general testimony of the teachers of our grammar schools, that the pupils, received by them from the primary schools, are much better fitted to go profitably forward, than those received from private schools.

RHODE ISLAND.

We have not been able to obtain any late official documents respecting the common schools of this state. In 1839 the several acts relating to the subject were revised and amended. By this act the whole management of the schools were entrusted to a committee of not less than 5 and not more than 30 persons, to be elected annually by the several towns. These committees are required to make official returns to the Secretary of State annually in the usual particulars. We are not aware that any reports have been published from the State department giving the results of these returns.

PROVIDENCE.

No city in the United States has done so much in so short a period of time as Providence, to organize on a broad scale a system of public schools adequate to meet the wants of the age and of our institutions.

The system embraces 10 *Primary Schools*, 6 *Grammar Schools*, 1 *High School* and 2 schools for colored children, in all of which free instruction is given to such children of both sexes belonging to the city as may see fit to avail themselves of the same.

In the *Primary schools* children over 4 years are taught spelling, reading, and the elements of Geography and Arithmetic, with the aid of maps, engravings, models and other apparatus.

In the *Grammar Schools* children over 7 are received, who may be found properly qualified in the studies of the *Primary Schools*, and conducted forward into Grammar, Writing, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Composition, History, practical Ethics and the Constitution of the United States. In the *High School*, children over 12 years, if found qualified in the studies of the *Grammar School*, on due examination are received for three years. The studies are a continuation of those of the *Grammar School*, with Rhetoric, Logic and Intellectual Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Evidences of Christianity, Algebra, Geometry and Book keeping, Physiology, Astronomy, Chemistry. The *High School* building is not completed or the school organized.

The supervision and management of the schools is entrusted to a committee appointed by the city council with power to appoint sub-committees, and a Superintendent, who devotes his whole time to the interest and welfare of those schools under the direction of the committee. The superintendent receives a salary of \$1250, with office expenses, &c.

The Principal of the *High School* has a salary of \$1250: each of the male assistants in do. \$750, and female do. \$500.

Each master of *Grammar School*, \$800, each male assistant \$400, and each female do. \$225.

Each *Preceptress* in the *Primary Schools* \$250.

All of the school houses are new, elegant, convenient and substantial buildings combining all of the recent improvements in school house architecture. The number of scholars is constantly increasing. Since the Regulations of the schools were published, the number of *Primary Schools* have been increased, so that there are now 23 schools in all and 3,500 scholars.

This has all been done in less than four years.

In June 1837 a committee of the city council of Providence was appointed to take into consideration the expediency of a new organization of the public schools. This committee were authorized to raise a sub-committee to visit the schools in Boston, Salem, Lowell and New Bedford.

This committee made a report in September, of the results of their visit to the general committee. From this report we make the following extracts.

In speaking of the system and schools of Boston the committee remark.

"THE HIGH SCHOOL [English high school.] It is perhaps the greatest incentive to ambition to the pupils of the other schools. From this institution are sent out among the people, young men of a high order of talent, who mingling with the general mass, sustain and elevate the character of the community. Here is given instruction in the elements of mathematics and natural philosophy, with their application to the sciences and the arts; in grammar, rhetoric and belles lettres; in moral philosophy, and in history, natural and civil. The master of the high school is paid twenty-four hundred dollars; the sub-master, fifteen hundred; and the usher, six hundred dollars per annum.

It appears to be a well grounded opinion, that in all the important branches of instruction, a general comparison between the public and private schools, would be honorable to those supported and cherished by public munificence and in which the great body of the community are educated. The number of children in the private schools is comparatively small.

When the high school was first established, it encountered a feeble opposition, but is now universally approved. There are no private schools, except two or three of a small number of pupils, kept by females. Since the establishment of the high school, six years since, all of the former private schools have been abandoned.

"The interest manifested in Lowell, in the cause of education, is beyond all praise. More than one half of the city tax, amounting to thirty two thousand dollars, was this year appropriated for the benefit of the public schools; and all this in addition to the sum to be expended in erecting a building for the high school. The committee were informed, that such was the interest felt in the public schools, that no objections were ever urged against any necessary appropriation for their advancement. At the meetings of the school committee, all the members usually attend.

The committee were much pleased with the appearance of the schools in Lowell, especially with that of the high school. When it is considered that the entire population of that place has been gathered together within the short period of fifteen years, such an impulse in behalf of education, indicates what will be the future character of that population.

The committee also visited some of the public schools in Charlestown. It is hardly possible to speak in too much praise of the interest manifested by that community in the cause of education.

The schools visited were in fine order, and the exercises very interesting. Better reading, speaking or writing, the committee no where met with. The school rooms are all painted, as are also the desks and seats:—the latter have been in use four years and are uninjured.

In these schools the common and higher branches of learning are taught. In one of them denominated the high school, pupils are prepared to enter the University at Cambridge. Children are received into the primary schools at the age of four years, and remain until they arrive at eight years: the males are then transferred to the grammar school for boys, and the females to the same class of schools appropriated for them. In these higher schools they are allowed to continue until they are sixteen years of age."